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As We Remember Him

By

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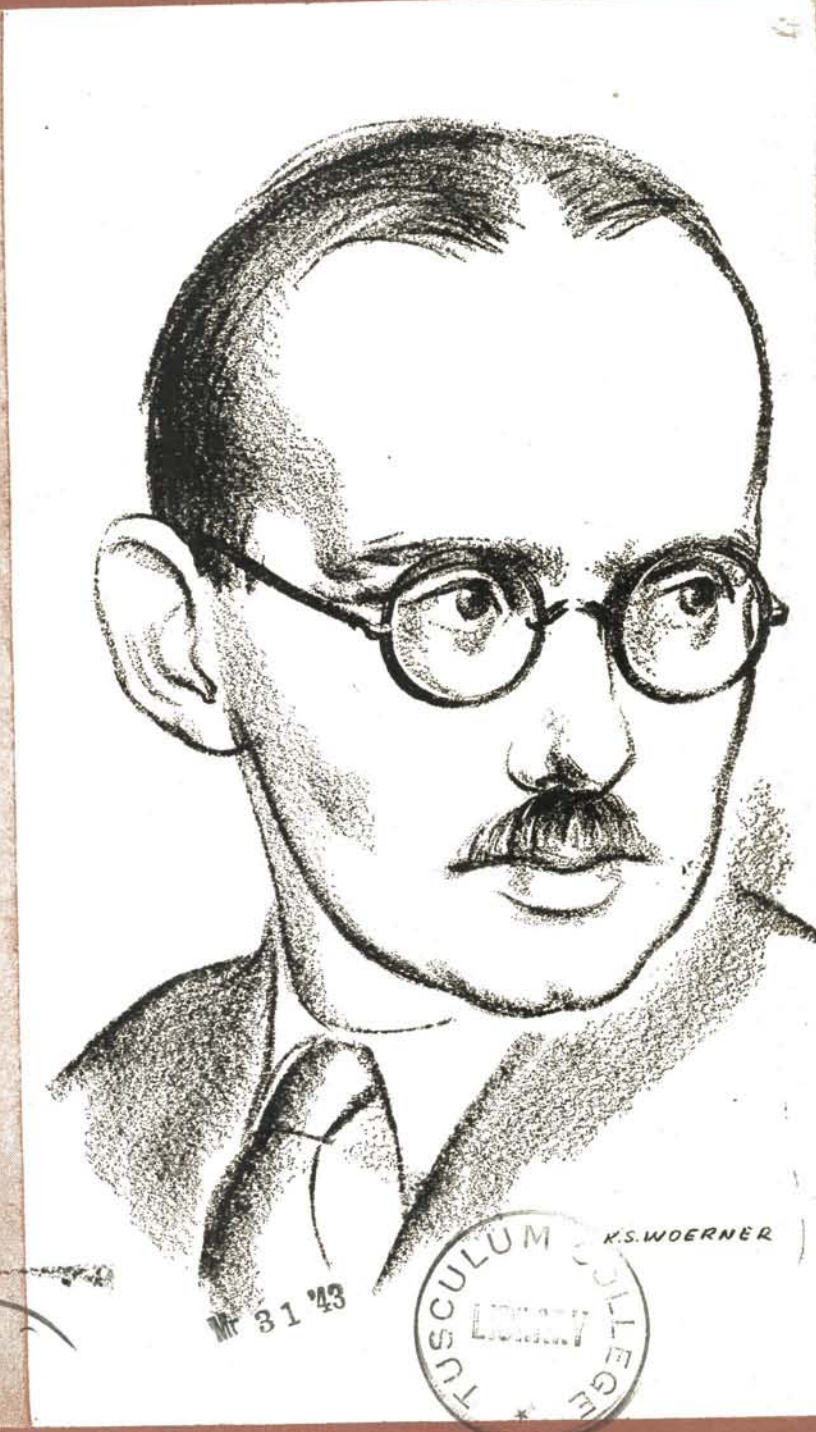

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Does this sound like bragging? I hope so, because that's what it is, and who wouldn't brag of such distinction?

Lewis Browne, of "This Believing World" fame, recently wrote "Something Went Wrong" while a welcome guest at this inn. We hope he didn't get the idea or his title as Thurber did while dining in our restaurant.

We could go on like this for hours, and perhaps we will in another adv., for the list is a long one.

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This Week

March 27, 1943

In view of the space devoted in this number to the late Stephen Vincent Benét, the round-table discussion of "Shall We Writers Fail Again?," by Sir Norman Angell, announced for this issue, will be published next week.

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—Emelie Danielson

S. V. B.

1898 - 1943

BY WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

"THIS I shall write," he said.
They said, "Vain dreaming!"
So he went down to the dead
And more than their seeming
Brought back in a living book
For the sons of men to share
Where immortal banners shook
Over armies in the air.

"This," said Pain, "you will bear."
He said, "Non dolet.
Shall Man's predestined share
The springing soul let,
Let, hinder, or constrain
From the call of the work at hand?
I shall search your world, O Pain;
I shall understand."

So, throughout all the land,
None brought him in vain
(To weigh in a thoughtful hand)
The living grain;
To find the pearl in the dust,
Or of true gold the token,
With generous word and just
Endlessly spoken.

So flowed in tide unbroken
Glamour of story,
Glory of song—but more
Than glamour or glory:
Wisdom and insight that grew,
An inner truth that spoke:
The fleece that was filled with dew;
The god in the oak.

And legend for his own folk,
Of their toil and their mirth;
Tang of the tongue they spoke,
The savour of their earth;
Till, when foul darkness stirred
To blast all singing,
Men heard his quiet word
Steady and ringing.

Speaking to them of their land,
Of a great wind's breath
That blows from strand to strand
Against evil and death,
And now, like the drums' long roll,
Rises and floods and fills
Body and heart and soul
With the strength of our hills.

So he spoke to the end,
As he lived and wrought:
Simply, and as a friend,
From his burning thought.
But I know what shapes of light
Shine in the dome—
What stars are bright tonight
Where he comes home.

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My Brother Steve

A Poet Who Has Never Cared Much About An Ivory Tower

The following article is condensed from The Saturday Review of Literature *of November 15, 1941.*

THE life of a writer is a constant fight for his integrity, for his best and most honest expression. The more successful one becomes, the more pitfalls present themselves, the more false lures attract. I have watched my brother become a first-rate writing man, support a wife and three children, and at the same time save his own soul. Nor has he ever shirked a real assignment.

Like many a man who has lived to accomplish a great deal (notably the late Theodore Roosevelt) Steve's early constitution was not of the most robust. Consequently, he did not go in very heavily for games, and began to lead an interior life of the mind. At the same time, his taste in books was catholic enough. He easily descended to "Peck's Bad Boy" and an American humorist with the peculiar typographical pseudonym of "M. Quad." He still contends to this day that the incident where Peck's bad boy fed his father white rubber hose for spaghetti revealed a remarkable power of invention on the part of the author. He read Lang, "E. Nesbit," dozens of Henty books (like thousands of other boys), Dumas—and from Howard Pyle's "Men of Iron" and some of William Morris's poetry and prose, he began to gain an idea of how the past could be presented in terms of realistic detail.

At about the age of ten he was sent to the Hitchcock Military Academy in California, where one boy he remembers was the son of the famous early French flier, Moisant. Neither boy, I think, cared for that school. Like so many writers in youth, Steve was bullied a good deal, schoolboy misery preserved for us in such poems from his second book, "Young Adventure," as "Going Back to School" and the sympathetic poem about Shelley at Eton. Not that my brother was a self-pitier. He took what was coming to him from the Nazi-minded of that day, and licked his wounds in secret. He came to know that life was not exactly that of a knight in the days of chivalry, and began to develop the protective integument we all have to assume.

By the time I was established in New York as a publisher's reader, Steve was down in Augusta, Georgia, with my Father and Mother. To the latter he owed much through his early years not only for devoted care but for lively understanding. Just prior to the change of base, at the age of thirteen, he had won a cash prize from the *Saint Nicholas League* with a poem, "The Regret of Dives." It was apparent from this poem that he did not, however, desire to become rich. He has since told us that he was then under the impression that *Dives* rhymed with *hives,* though fortunately the name occurred only in the poem's title. He got three dollars for it and spent it on the train coming East from California. In another poem of the period he stigmatized "The Proud Man," imagining himself sitting in a tower aloof from the world, till at last a glance from a window showed him how all mankind had passed him by and gone beyond him. The execution of these verses leaves something to be desired, but the point-of-view remained characteristic. My brother has never cared much about an ivory tower.

A rare issue of a book-collector's quarterly of eight years ago contains an essay of Steve's called "The Sixth Man," in which he describes our father's influence upon his formative years, the big house in California, and how he came to realize early in life that poetry "was not a dead thing or an alien thing or a dry game of words. I knew there were rules and that you could break the rules but that you must never break them unintentionally. I knew it was always written by the living, even though the date-line said that the man was dead."

Steve entered Yale. The first World War was just coming over the horizon. In his sophomore year my brother was taken on the *Lit,* of which he later became Chairman. Those happened to be great years for writing among undergraduates in the Eastern universities. Yale had Archibald MacLeish, Thornton Wilder, Philip Barry. Harvard could boast Dos Passos, Cummings, and T. S. Eliot. At Princeton were F. Scott Fitzgerald, Edmund Wilson, and John Peale Bishop. It was such a renaissance as has not shone again.

In his junior year Steve wrote the Yale University Prize Poem, "The Drug Shop, or, Endymion in Edmonstoun," a poem about Keats; and in the same year, after enlisting and then being rejected from the Army because of defective eyesight, he entered the State Department as a cipher-clerk, a profession also then adorned by Mr. James Thurber, afterward author of "The Seal in the Bedroom." Later on Steve became a clerk in the Office of the Counselor. At that time he roomed in Washington with John Franklin Carter (later well-known under a pseudonym as a writer on political and international subjects), Thornton Wilder, and Bill Taylor. After the war he returned to college for his B.A.; and his second book of poems, "Young Adventure," was published by the Yale University Press.

This drawing of Stephen Vincent Benét at the age of ten is the work of his brother, William Rose, then 22.

Subsequent to graduation, Steve worked the next summer in the office of Charles W. Hoyt, Planned Advertising, the only business office in which, to my knowledge, he has ever labored. He went back to the Yale Graduate School to take his M.A. in one year, a possible thing at that time. He presented, in lieu of a thesis, his third book of poems, "Heavens and Earth," and Ex-Governor Wilbur Cross, then head of the Graduate School, accepted the substitution. In that young and enthusiastic volume you will find in the section, "The Tall Town," a poem of the war called "Colloquy of the Stat-

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ues," and poems about lunch-time on Broadway, the strike-pickets on lower Fifth Avenue, morning on 32nd Street, and the red and white flashes by night of the Metropolitan Tower, reflections of my brother's thoughts while pursuing for a brief moment the almighty dollar of national advertising!

By this time Steve had definitely decided to throw in his lot with literature. He spent the summer after leaving Yale in writing his first novel, "The Beginning of Wisdom," and went over to Paris with John Carter, to study, presumably, at the Sorbonne. In Paris he got some reading done, and some drinking, and incidentally met the delightful and talented girl he was soon to marry. She was working for the Paris edition of the Chicago *Tribune* and for the London *Daily Mail*. When they returned to the United States separately, to consult their respective parents and prepare for marriage, Steve turned to and, under high pressure, wrote his second novel, "Young People's Pride," which Carl Brandt serialized for him with Henry Blackman Sell of *Harper's Bazaar*. The book is dedicated to Rosemary Carr with a special delightful poem, and on the first page occurs the name of one of the characters, Johnny Chipman—part of the name of John Chipman Farrar, who is today head of the publishing house of Farrar & Rinehart and Steve's own publisher.

The serial money enabled my brother and his wife, after their wedding in Chicago, to return to Paris and begin life together in that city of cities that had early won their hearts.

Out at Neuilly, Steve dug in, toted masses of books home from a Paris library, and went to work recreating the American Civil War. Those long armchair discussions with his father, in California and Georgia, must have recurred to him vividly! His utter surprise when the fiinshed book became a best-seller is a story that has often been told. When asked by a ship-news reporter what it felt like, he characteristically remarked that to him it was as though he had given birth to a grand piano. Prior to this, his longest flight into history had been a novel concerning the Minorcan revolt at New Smyrna, Florida, called "Spanish Bayonet." Then our father had been alive. This time the only shadow on Steve's success was the fact that our father was gone, though he had lived to read portions of the manuscript in its early stages.

The success of this book enabled him to proceed with his writing more at his own pace. It also brought him the Pulitzer Prize. His short stories grew better and better. Today one of the most famous is being interpreted on the screen by Walter Huston, Edward Arnold, and others. But at first he was loath to collect them. He brought out, instead, a collection of ballads and poems, work of the past fifteen years. Here were, among other excellent things, his earlier *Nation* Prize poem, "King David," the famous "Mountain Whippoorwill," that fine sonnet sequence called "The Golden Corpse," and also a strangely moving earlier poem of untried youth, which he had attempted to revise. But it was now 1930 and the poem had first been written in 1917. So the new last verse reads:

> After the thirteenth year, the water runs as before,
> The gemmed wave in the water, the starlight on the gem,
> All but the crew who sailed there, and they return no more,
> But the words are as they were written. I cannot alter them.

That too I find characteristic of Steve; for one of his virtues is loyalty —not blind, not sentimental, but considered, wise, and final. He has something in his character like a rampart. It cannot be moved. Five or six years later, in "Burning City," which contains his great poem against dictators, he gives us several fiery glimpses of what it is to be a real poet.

He had written his new novel, "James Shore's Daughter," and now at last he launched selected "Stories of Several Worlds" in "Thirteen o'Clock." Among them stands "The Devil and Daniel Webster" (now appearing on the screen), "The King of the Cats," and "Daniel Webster and the Sea Serpent." Already his wife and he had collaborated on a gay book in rhyme concerning historic Americans.

By now I have had to regard my younger brother as by way of becoming an American institution! "Stephen Benét Wins O. Henry Story Prize"—"Roosevelt Medal Awarded Stephen Benét"—"Re-elected Vice President of National Institute"—"Member of the American Academy"—and so on *ad infinitum!* One source of pale envy on my part, incidentally, has been the way Steve has always collected prizes. Every time they put one up, they decide to give it to him! He was always lucky with slot-machines, too, I remember. Frank Morley once organized the "Brothers Club," because his brother Christopher was getting altogether too famous. I am a charter member of that organization—just because of Steve!

There are three children now, an older daughter who is, indeed, no longer a child, but a young lady; a son at Exeter; a younger daughter of highly original gifts. There is Rosemary, Steve's wife, who was born to understand just why he has wished to write exactly as he has written. She lends his household infinite charm, collaborates with him on the portraits of other writ-

---

Love to Stephen

By Elinor Wylie

CHERUB in armor;
Wolf in rabbit-skin;
New wine, far more
Harsh than its habit-skin;
Nice rice pudding;
Bonaparte brandy;
Hellebore brooding
On peppermint candy.
Apple-cheeked shepherd-boy
Giants make irate;
Gunpowder-peppered boy;
Mild-mannered pirate,
Strung from the yard-arm
For flying a skull-and-bones;
Strong in the sword-arm
To punish the sullen bones
Of Mitching Malecho
Or defend Queen Guinevere.
Red and white calico
Banded with miniver;
Sometimes a stag you are,
Sometimes a stallion,
Sometimes a jaguar
Or a Spanish galleon
Raiding the Azores;
Beneath a silk mitten
Your fingers are razors.
A wild-cat kitten
Striped black and furry tan,
Trussed in a uniform
Tight and Puritan.
Queer as cuneiform;
A scarlet rocket
And a clean tin dipper;
David Crockett
And a Salem skipper.
A canvas of Rembrandt's
Might seem your proper field—
But—the resemblance
To Master Copperfield!
Perhaps, in small ways,
A starched child-chorister,
But fierce, and always
Robin Hood's forester.
Who shall draw
Or tell your story
Brother, in-law
And in outlawry?

The foregoing poem is reprinted through the courtesy of Alfred A. Knopf, from the recently published "Last Poems of Elinor Wylie."

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ers that they do for Irita Van Doren's *Books,* translates Colette from the French, and judges children's books with rare ability. And now there is the Whistler House in the old whaling port of Stonington, Connecticut, where Steve and Rosemary hope to spend years that are sure to be anything but "declining"! In town, there is the large old-fashioned house in the East Sixties, with a more secluded air-conditioned study now, on an upper floor, where work upon a pioneer epic, among other projects, goes steadily forward.

If one has been at one time pretty hard hit by arthritis, one does not stand quite as straight as one has in the past, even though one's spirit may be like a lance. But one does not lose, for all that, the persistent twinkle, the drawlingly American sense of humor, the keen appraisal of the follies and crimes of the times. There is a southern tinge to the hospitality too—a courtesy and kindness at once apparent, a consideration that caused a young in-law of mine once to remark, "Why good Lord, he was asking me *my* opinion!"

Steve has developed in a manner I can thoroughly admire. Perhaps it is true, as he avers, that once I was in a position to read to him most of Bryant's translation of the Iliad, or to write a foreword and draw a cover for an early unpublished work then known as "Poems and Battle Songs." I can, indeed, remember the time when I actually used to tell him stories. Today, how utterly preposterous that seems!

Steve has not been spared his full share of the acerbity of contemporary criticism. But he can usually tell exactly what is eating the critics and why. He drawls, "Oh we-ll—!" He does not take himself too seriously. He has enjoyed his work, and the rewards thereof. He could calculate to a nicety just when he knew he was hitting the ball, and when he wasn't. Lately, it has seemed to one admiring relative, he has hit it pretty consistently right upon the nose. "Wait till you come to forty year!" warned Thackeray. But today we know that that is just when life begins. Steve is three years past, and but only coming into his own. What matters is what he himself has written in "Thanks":

> The metal heats, the flesh grows numb again
> And I can still go muttering down the street
> Not seeing the interminable world
> Nor the ape-faces, only the live coal

—which is, after all, the writer's one permanent reward. That and the skill that was fought for and hard-won, that burns in the hand now, and can reveal the vision.

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT.

As We Remember Him

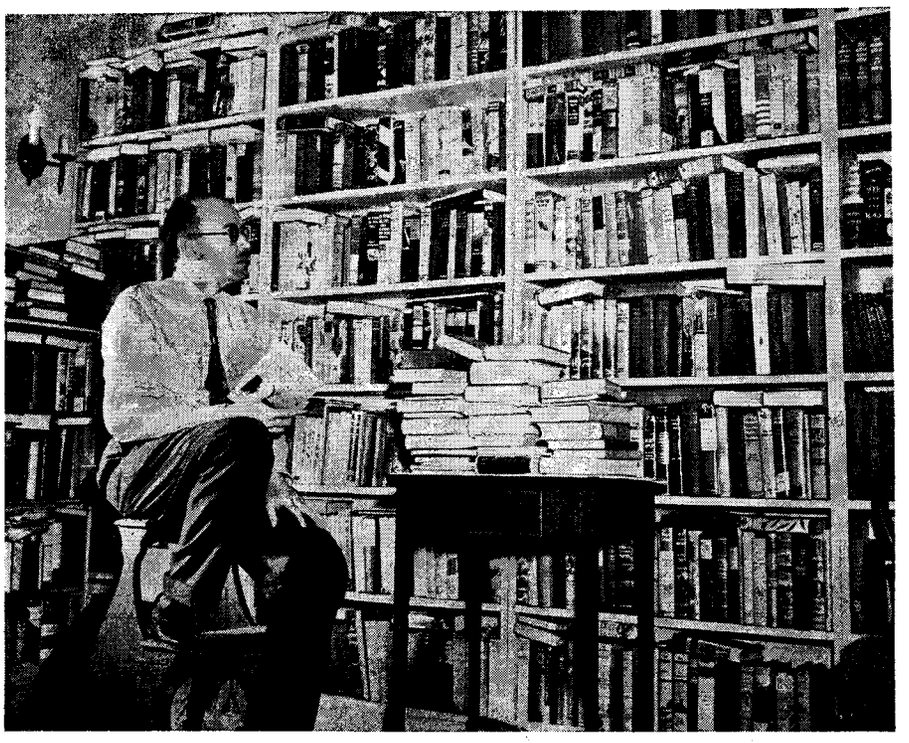
Archibald MacLeish

I SUPPOSE all of us have been thinking about Steve as I have been thinking about him. Somehow, his death is not only a finality in his life, but a finality in our lives also. The end of a piece of one's life. And I do not mean merely that we all felt about Steve as we did—for I suppose there was no one who knew him who did not love him. What I mean is something more personal and more immediate. Perhaps because he died so young, perhaps because he spoke for so many of us, in so many ways, his silence becomes, for a time at least, the silence of us all. But it is more even than that. Those who understand each other will say to each other, That was before Steve died. Or, that was afterward.

I do not mean to say, or to imply, that Steve in any way stood for a "literary generation." One of his extraordinary qualities was precisely the fact that he did not belong to a literary generation, or to a literary party or group of any kind. There were a lot of literary generations in his lifetime. There must have been as many as one every two or three years. There was always a new group which really understood about poetry—which appropriated poetry for its own understanding—which took it away and made it a private possession, a secret possession often. Steve never belonged to the groups or the generations. I don't believe, although he never spoke of them, he had much patience with their private vocabularies, their public intolerance, their proprietorship of the art.

What I mean is this, that Steve's life was a part of all our lives in a very unusual sense—in a way no one else's was a part of them.

Thinking about these things, and thinking about the particular things I remember, the things I remember most clearly, it has occurred to me to wonder if the most remarkable aspect of Steve's life wasn't the way he bore himself as a poet. At the moment, of course, we all think of the work Steve did over the last two or three years—the fact that he gave his life for a cause, if ever a man gave his life for a cause. I know, for myself, I never asked him to do anything, however difficult, at however brief a notice, that he did not gladly do—and do superbly. But later on, we may remember more the way he bore himself. His life was a model, I think, of what a poet's life should be—a model upon which young men of later generations might well form themselves. He was altogether without envy or vanity. He never considered appearance, or tried to present himself as anything but what he was, or paid the least attention to the prevalent notions, the fashionable preconceptions, of what a poet ought to be. Also, and more important, he was truly generous. He was generous not



—*Acme Photo*

A recent photograph of Stephen Vincent Benét in his library.

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only in his estimates of young poets—young men and women who sent him their work. What has much more meaning, he was generous toward his contemporaries. It pleased him to find new work he admired.

Moreover, his generosity was not a moral quality alone. It was an intellectual quality as well. He never took part in vituperation or personal controversy, or any of the cruel, petty hatreds which destroy the equanimity and balance, to say nothing of the work, of so many men of letters. He did not take part in these controversies and quarrels because he truly felt himself no part of them. They did not concern him. He was thinking of other things, of things that belonged to all men and belonged to him not as a writer only but as a man. It was this warm and human concern with things seen, things felt, things beyond himself, which gave him his quality as a man. It was this also which gave him him his essential quality as a poet. I wish we could preserve this quality of Steve's in some form of words so that a later generation of young poets might possess it and might truly understand that such a practice of their art was possible—so gentle and so pure a practice of such perfect honor and integrity.

Others who will speak of Steve will speak of other things, perhaps of things of more importance. What I have written is what I feel most strongly, now when it is difficult to remember he is dead.

Christopher Morley

ON a day twenty-five years ago I tapped out my pipe on the doorstep and went into Leary's bookstore in Philadelphia. On the shelf where they kept editorial copies promptly cashed by the reviewers I saw a new book called "Young Adventure." I remember the occasion very well because I wrote a verse about it at the time. My first interest in the book was because it was by the younger brother of a friend. But as soon as I opened it I met a new talent on its own terms. Adorably and incredibly young—a lot of people were young then—but with freak and velocity unmistakable; imitative still but knowing what footsteps were good to follow. I can still remember my dazzle and delight, and perhaps also (poets being men) something of inward envy that so youthful a versifier had such arching fireworks at command. With the shock of excited recognition I ran to and fro in the book, exploring this vivacious mind. Hey, I said to myself after I had zigzagged a hundred fancies (both the poet's and my own). Hey, I said, this is no place to be reading this book. This needs privacy. I bought it and went out, having experienced a young lifetime of man's finest excitement. I set off for the wide sunny pavement of Chestnut Street, outside the old Federal Building, to think it over, and taking my pipe from my pocket to fill it again, the briar was still warm in my hand.

Such is the lightning communication of the brain. Perhaps any poet is most himself when he speaks of other poets. Of the many powers I have admired in Stephen Benét perhaps I feel most completely secure when he writes, let us say, of Walt Whitman or of Vachel Lindsay. There the gasconade of a boy rises to the anger of a man. I am less sure sometimes in work more brilliantly quotable. Perhaps it is less final to say that all the rivers of the kings flowed into Mississippi and were drowned because we so complacently applaud. The thrilling Americanism of the famous Invocation, gorgeous as it is, comes maybe, a little less close to pure artery than some of the fables and nightmares that became part of our folklore as soon as the ink struck root in the paper.

When you find an imagination that grows instinctively from gaiety to horror you find an imagination that has muscle. I was secretly a little afraid, for a while, that they were going to swamp Stephen Benét with academician doings. But when I last saw him, not many weeks ago, I was thrilled to recognize the same spark of Athene's mischief in his eye; or the patriotism of Pan.

His most famous achievement, deservedly and miraculously acclaimed as such, was written far away. The best things are often written so; homesickness for home he will never see are the poet's burden. When Stephen Benét came back to live in the city called Marvelous he began to discover those twinges that suggest an opening door. His fairytales of the steel termites and the homicidal machines and an all-human sterility were as real folklore for the cerebral as "The Devil and Daniel Webster" for the reader on the run.

Stephen Benét was the cadet of a singing blood, an accident that puts a heavy bend upon a proud man's feeling. Yet he invented and made perfect his own special intuition and entered both by gaiety and gravity into the small troop of the cavalry of the word. Perhaps it was of his characteristic temper to take his leave in a day between seasons, recognizable either as lingering winter or as appeasing spring. He had described both with joyous felicity, so whichever it was earth would identify him as its own. So also he was one of the latest of our traditional makers and the earliest of our spokesmen of new music. He was the luckiest of all our young poets in a stormy generation, having made permanent so large a sharing of his dream. The world was a coon that's climbed a tree, and he was Davy Crockett. Our gratitude will keep him among the American names he loved. As he said in his own enigmatic expression of thanks, he

> . . . can still go muttering down the street
> Not seeing the interminable world
> Nor the ape-faces, only the live coal.

Brothers Steve and Bill Benét at the respective ages of 16 and 28.

Carl Carmer

OFTEN in the last few years I sat with Stephen Benét in editorial conferences in our publisher's office. For him this kind of work was a delightful game and he made his fellow-editors play it with him. Equipped with intuitive literary perception he was astonishingly quick in recognizing an author's purposes. He was enthusiastic in his appreciations and constructive criticisms of the manuscripts he liked, humorous in his despair over the others. He gave himself to solving the problems of his fellow-writers with as much eagerness as if they had been his own. In these days of sorrow over his going the distinguished creative artists of our time have written and spoken their admiration and affection. Their impressive tributes are less revealing of human quality, however, than the grief of our young and as yet not widely recognized writers. They knew better than other men his constant kindliness, his earnest encouragement, his unfailing and selfish devotion to the art they would serve.

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William Lyon Phelps

I FIRST became acquainted with Stephen when he entered Yale. He was seventeen and had already *published* a volume of poems. He was one of the best students I ever had; and his membership in the Pundits and in the Elizabethan Club gave me the privilege of his company very often. Philip Barry, Yale '18, Stephen, '19, and Thornton Wilder, '20, were a fine trio; and although children and youths do not always fulfill their promise, I felt sure of these three. Stephen was so original—witty as well as imaginative—that he needed no teacher; and all I can say is that it was a delight for me to have him in my classroom.

Not long after his graduation Stephen's writings began to attract considerable attention, and in less than ten years his full power was revealed in "John Brown's Body." Apart from a number of short stories that he was obliged to write in order to live, his attitude to his art showed both wisdom and nobility. He never took himself too seriously, but he always took his real work seriously; and there was about him an unassuming integrity of mind. He was full of humor and full of sincerity; but I mean something more than that. In his own creative writing and in his own serious conversational talk, it was impossible for him to write or say anything that he did not mean. His poems and stories were effective because he never tried for effect.

Only six years after Stephen's graduation from college he wrote out his plans for the immediate future in a way that shows he always knew his latitude and longitude. He made application for a Guggenheim Fellowship.

Mr. Moe has given permission to reprint a paragraph from his letter to the Foundation, saying that they gave him a "blank check" to write what he pleased.

> I cannot promise accomplishment —no writer with a degree of honesty can. I can promise work, and I think I can promise, with some definiteness, better work and a greater amount of it, under such conditions, than it seems likely I shall be able to produce without them. I should intend to finish at least one book of narrative poems at the end of the year—with, possibly, other work mapped out or in train—that is all that I can say. I realize that to do that, in the way I should wish to do it, would take more energy and harder labor than I have yet expended on any single object—but I should be more than grateful for the opportunity. My ultimate purpose in study, or, for that matter, in existence, is to attempt to write good poetry, and, given the opportunity, I shall do the best I can to further that purpose.

As a result of this fellowship the world acquired "John Brown's Body."

—*Acme Photo*

Stephen Vincent Benét was an expert Double-Crosticker. He is shown here with his wife, Rosemary.

Thornton Wilder

WE are grateful to Stephen Vincent Benét for many things, but principally because he was the first of our poets who knew the whole country and used the poet's means for opening our eyes to all of it. He loved the United States, singly and collectively, and his rich evocation of any portion of it differed from that of the regional writers' through the fact that the entire continent was always present to his mind. He had a thorough knowledge of its history as well—a learning which he was constantly able to transmute into poetry. The brilliance of his treatment of the national scene and its history, however, should not overshadow the excellence of his reflective poetry which has been gaining an ever-widening circle of readers.

From those who knew him, in person or through correspondence, an equal measure of gratitude goes forward to Stephen Vincent Benét, the man. Scores of young poets throughout the country submitted verses to him and received his generous encouragement and counsel. The sense of loss felt by his friends has one added measure of regret in that he did not live to see the outcome of the war. He had studied his country's wars with a historian's thoroughness and a patriot's ardor. In spite of precarious health, he found many ways of bringing before the public his eloquent interpretation of the deepest issues of this, his country's greatest war.

John Berdan

WHILE Steve Benét was an undergraduate at Yale, a lecturer unhappily dwelt upon the personal idiosyncrasies of one of our great English poets. Flaming with youthful anger, Steve wrote a poem excoriating the said lecturer for confusing the man and the artist. Remembering that poem, I am sure that he would resent my writing a column of gossipy reminiscences; he would wish me briefly to tell the truth as I see it.

But to tell the truth, to make you the reader see Steve as I knew him is a difficult task. He had none of the physical attributes of the undergraduate hero. For the undergraduate after all is only a boy with a boy's growing body and an admiration for the strong bodies of his classmates. The football player, the crewman, and track star, these he can understand and appreciate. Steve was slight, near-sighted, and diffident; he had none of the appeals to undergraduate valuations. Not in the externals, but in the internals lay his strength. But that little world is not so stupid as we sometimes cynically think, and long before Steve had finished his college course, he was one of the most admired men of his class.

This eminence was accomplished by merely being himself. I do not think that it ever occurred to him that he ought to conform, to follow the crowd, to worship fashionable idols. Quite simply he went his own way. And this was true also in life. The country entered World War I in an orgy of hysterical sentimentality. In 1917, when the recruits marched out of New Haven, each embryo soldier was presented with a carnation bought with civic funds. How sweet! But it was not sweet when those men came back looking for jobs—and found none; when at night the Green looked like a battlefield with men sleeping on the grass beneath the stars. Of course there was disillusionment with the accompanying cynicism. And this is the mood of much of our modern writing. Here, in the old dualism of the body and the soul, it is the body that receives the emphasis. But not in the work of Stephen Benét. In his poem, "Complaint of Body, the Ass, Against His Rider, the Soul," it is the soul that dominates and makes the poor complaining body do its will. It is the spirit that quickeneth. Thus with Steve there is a curious kinship with another New England writer, Hawthorne. Both are looking beyond the present and the actual to determine what is their significance. Peering through his thick-lensed glasses, Steve first tries himself to see, and then tries to make us see, what are the real values in American society and in American life.

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John Farrar

STEVE BENÉT was the sort of man of whom much will probably be written in the years ahead. His was the kind of variegated and energetic personality which encourages legend. And he was deeply loved by hundreds who knew him and by millions, actually, all over the world who had never seen him. It is difficult to write of a friend so recently and so suddenly gone, but I should like briefly to do three things—to acknowledge his untiring work and brilliant gifts as a publisher, to mention a quality of his which escaped many who saw in him only the gentle, the quiet, the self-effacing, and to tell one anecdote which he told me of himself.

In book publishing Steve played an active part since his coming to New York after taking his M.A. at New Haven, where he returned after the first World War. He advised young writers constantly and untiringly, and read and reported on manuscripts for many firms. Ever since my partners and I went into business in 1929, he has, I suppose, read and reported on practically every book of merit we have published, and many of little merit. He considered himself a member of our firm, and if we were puzzled, someone would say, "Phone Steve!" He was always there. His notes and reports, several of which we received in the days immediately following his death, would read, "We must publish this, although we'll never make a cent on it," or "This isn't art, but why not sell a lot of copies?" or "We'd better watch this one—he's real." Authors who have received his criticisms either through the mails or sitting in his study know that here was a man whose critical standards were firm, in whose reactions to manuscripts or books was no hint of personal prejudice. It is unthinkable that he was ever envious or jealous. He read with lightning speed and yet his often very full reports were not only accurate in detail but always in fine prose.

During the years just preceding the war and since Pearl Harbor his advice and assistance to us have been constant. Quick conferences were often arranged in which his great friend, Walter Millis, often sat—and others, Carl Carmer, Rex Stout, Henry Canby, Henry Pringle, Stan or Ted Rinehart, others of our own editorial staff.

It would be foolish to say that he was always right, but there was never any question about where he stood, and this leads me to the point I wish to make about his anger, his blazing indignation. I have seen Steve leave a room in a towering rage when he felt an absent friend had been unfairly criticized. At a point, when the things he believed were attacked, his eyes could blaze and the quiet voice became loud with scorn and invective.

Not long ago he told me one of the few stories about himself that he ever told me. After he bought a house in Stonington, Connecticut, he came to love the town and the people in it. He was proud that the country folk liked him. He said, with that apologetic, sudden chuckle,

> "They see me going down the street, and they say: 'There goes Benny, the poet. He's thinkin'."

I like that story, too. He's done a lot of thinking for a lot of us, and he's going right on.

The Plow

(*A New England Tragedy*)

STEPHEN VINCENT BENÉT

HABBERTON'S plow!
John made it,
William stayed it,
Sharp the blade it bears till now!

Wind shadowed billows of rippling grass,
Under a sky as clear as glass.

And a road that bent like a crooked arm
Over the hill to Habberton's Farm!

Two stone posts and a gate between,
A well sweep, dripping and cool and green.

And a girl who strained in the August sun
For the stud of hoofs where the path lay dun;

For a cloud that grew in a moment's course
To the sweat and speed of a flying horse.

Though the dust lay white upon spur and shoe,
On the steaming flanks, and the trooper's blue,

When the ride was done and the reins hung slack,
And he swung her up to the bay's wet back
And kissed her brows in an arch of black!

Clung together, she heard him say,
"Three months more till our wedding day!"

"Three months more and this purse'll buy
The next two farms by the Mill Brook dry.

And then long years of the kindly sun,
Children and work and the wild times done;
—And an end in peace that our hands have won.

Here I'll bide till the morning comes,
Then go back to the beat of the drums."

The foregoing poem appeared in the Yale Literary Magazine *in November, 1917, during Stephen Vincent Benét's undergraduate days.*

Philip Barry

IT is too soon to write about him. The sense of indignation, of actual anger, at this deprivation is still present. Later, one may be wiser, may see that his schedule was different, that this sourceless and endless traveling spirit stopped over here of necessity briefly, because the universe of such is big. Nevertheless, he deeply loved it and those in it and would have stayed on longer, if he had had his way. Certainly he left his blessings and many gifts for which, God knows, gratitude is indicated and is given.

Last autumn he took a Sunday off, and came down to East Hampton. It was a fine day and we sat looking out over water and talking, of all things, of epitaphs. "I know one for you," I said, and he said "What?" and I said "Even Stephen." "I like that," he said. Then, of course, I had to develop it:

> "Even Stephen? *He* must go?
> Even Stephen. Even so."

He looked around and grinned. "I like that too," he said. "But it's sort of scary."

Now I am counting my words, as in a telegram. All right, that's what it is. Please forward. Best remembrances, best thanks for many years of benefit in friendship.

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Muriel Rukeyser

OTHER people will write of Stephen Benét as poet, and of his poems. I had the fortune of knowing him in two other ways; as editor, kind in rejection before he was kind in acceptance, and as war writer. In turning down my first book, he wrote that he thought a commercial publishing house would print it, and that it might come out, when it would have, in the Yale Series which he was judging and editing. But he did more than write a buffer letter of rejection; he followed it with introductions to house after house. As they turned the book down, one after the other, he wrote further letters to me, talked to other people—this I heard much later—and then, when all the starts proved false, called for the book again for the Series, accepted it, and wrote its preface. After the book appeared, I met him for the first time.

The tall, immensely gentle body, the high and gentle voice—they are remembered. That voice was strengthened and roughened in his work. Caring about place, the colors of locality, the figures of earth that could be recognized even through change, he dealt with these. His concern for the changes of American background kept him dealing with the moment before the news arrived; his war poems began as the signs of war began, years ago, and when America finally joined the war, his work was ready for use, perhaps beyond any other American writer's work. For he had never gone off into false nationalism nor been led into temporary sympathies; keeping his own ground, he was writing work for the page and the air and the film that could be used for the broad works of showing and declaring and affirming the meanings of the war. The recent "Prayer" and "Dear Adolf" are the latest tokens of this. In helping to prepare these for national publication, I have this month felt once more the broad direction of his purpose.

All his work in backgrounds proved itself. He was able, more than any other writer, and for reasons which may be seen deep in his development, to turn himself and his talent over, at once and completely, to the war; this man who had been concerned with early beginnings ever since his own, and had widened that concern year after year to meet a democratic need.

To Rosemary

By Stephen Vincent Benét

IF you were gone afar,
And lost the pattern
Of all your delightful ways,
And the web undone,
How would one make you anew,
From what dew and flowers,
What burning and mingled atoms,
Under the sun?

Not from too-satin roses,
Or those rare blossoms,
Orchids, scentless and precious
As precious stone.
But out of lemon-verbena,
Rose-geranium,
These alone.

Not with running horses,
Or Spanish cannon,
Organs, voiced like a lion,
Clamor and speed.
But perhaps with old music-boxes,
Young, tawny kittens,
Wild-strawberry-seed.

Even so, it were more
Than a god could compass
To fashion the body merely,
The lovely shroud.
But then—ah, how to recapture
That evanescence,
The fire that cried in pure crystal
Out of its cloud!

S. V. B.

By Christopher La Farge

THIS room, that was so richly habited,
Clothed with good and dear living, with its warm
And brilliant ornaments, is untenanted
And is sealed now against both calm and storm.
We may not change it. It has been so fixed
That it's unalterable. Yet we may admire,
Remembering, its elements so mixed
That they give warmth despite the extinguished fire.
We who were fed and nourished in this room,
We who were comforted and strengthened there,
We see it warmed beyond the chilly gloom
Of such disuse, lit with a light so fair
And so compelling, such enduring light,
That it makes day immortal out of night.

Leonard Bacon

NO one who was present at the touching service, when the mortal part of Stephen Benét was consigned symbolically to the prolific dust, is likely to forget it. Every one must have reflected that, for some time to come, man's cause would not henceforward be so well served as it might have been. One could read that in the faces of a group of pleasant Negroes or on the countenance of a grocer's delivery boy down whose cheeks the tears were running. The simple ceremony was no mere tribute to death, with whose operation we are growing too familiar. It was rather emotion concerning something that had touched all walks of life, every caste, creed, and situation, equally and honorably. I do not know what their experience of Stephen Benét may have been, but it is easy to guess that, however different, it had been as delightful as my own.

My first encounter with him took place when he was twelve and I was twenty-four. I am happy to say that I played up and provided an adequate supply of chocolate éclairs. The debauch took place in the Palace Hotel in San Francisco and is one of the few parties of pleasure I remember, which ought to be forgotten. Thereafter I knew him for thirty-three years, during which he never altered for the worse. The charm and delicacy of the little boy became in due course the charm and delicacy which, only in a poor sense, are lost to us.

He was wise and kind when he was born, however difficult that may be to explain. As he grew older, he grew wiser and kinder, which is more difficult still. A paltry detractor or so has objected that he was lucky. It is perfectly true. The Gods smiled on him, and, it should be added, never, in their considerable experience, had better reason. That I do not propose to discuss. We have before us the record of a poet who, unlike his self-elected rivals, could trouble the soul of an expatriate in Paris, and, as I personally can testify, excite the burning interest of an Indian squaw in the Western desert.

At the twenty-sixth annual dinner of the Women's National Book Association, held in New York City last week, the Constance Lindsay Skinner Award was presented to Mary Graham Bonner for achievement in the field of creative writing. The bronze plaque, awarded annually to the woman of the book world who has made an outstanding contribution in her chosen field, was presented to Miss Bonner by Irita Van Doren of the *New York Herald Tribune "Books."*

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The Things He Fought For

A Selection from the Poems of Stephen Vincent Benet

FROM "JOHN BROWN'S BODY"

THIS flesh was seeded from no foreign grain
But Pennsylvania and Kentucky wheat,
And it has soaked in California rain
And five years tempered in New England sleet

To strive at last, against an alien proof
And by the changes of an alien moon,
To build again that blue, American roof
Over a half-forgotten battle-tune

And call unsurely, from a haunted ground,
Armies of shadows and the shadow-sound.

In your Long House there is an attic-place
Full of dead epics and machines that rust,
And there, occasionally, with casual face,
You come awhile to stir the sleepy dust;

Neither in pride nor mercy, but in vast
Indifference at so many gifts unsought,
The yellowed satins, smelling of the past,
And all the loot the lucky pirates brought.

I only bring a cup of silver air,
Yet, in your casualness, receive it there.

Receive the dream too haughty for the breast,
Receive the words that should have walked as bold
As the storm walks along the mountain-crest
And are like beggars whining in the cold.

The maimed presumption, the unskilful skill,
The patchwork colors, fading from the first,
And all the fire that fretted at the will
With such a barren ecstasy of thirst.

Receive them all—and should you choose to touch them
With one slant ray of quick, American light,
Even the dust will have no power to smutch them,
Even the worst will glitter in the night.

If not—the dry bones littered by the way
May still point giants toward their golden prey.

"LITANY FOR DICTATORSHIPS"

FOR all those beaten, for the broken heads,
The fosterless, the simple, the oppressed,
The ghosts in the burning city of our time . . .

For those taken in rapid cars to the house and beaten
By the skilful boys, the boys with the rubber fists,
—Held down and beaten, the table cutting their loins,
Or kicked in the groin and left, with the muscles jerking
Like a headless hen's on the floor of the slaughter-house
While they brought the next man in with his white eyes staring.
For those who still said "Red Front!" or "God Save the Crown!"
And for those who were not courageous
But were beaten nevertheless.
For those who spit out the bloody stumps of their teeth
Quietly in the hall,
Sleep well on stone or iron, watch for the time
And kill the guard in the privy before they die,
Those with the deep-socketed eyes and the lamp burning.

For those who carry the scars, who walk lame—for those
Whose nameless graves are made in the prison-yard
And the earth smoothed back before morning and the lime scattered.

For those slain at once. For those living through months and years
Enduring, watching, hoping, going each day
To the work or the queue for meat or the secret club,
Living meanwhile, begetting children, smuggling guns,
And found and killed at the end like rats in a drain.
For those escaping
Incredibly into exile and wandering there.
For those who live in the small rooms of foreign cities
And who yet think of the country, the long green grass,
The childhood voices, the language, the way wind smelt then,
The shape of rooms, the coffee drunk at the table,
The talk with friends, the loved city, the waiter's face,
The gravestones, with the name, where they will not lie
Nor in any of that earth. Their children are strangers.

For those who planned and were leaders and were beaten
And for those, humble and stupid, who had no plan
But were denounced, but grew angry, but told a joke,
But could not explain, but were sent away to the camp,
But had their bodies shipped back in the sealed coffins,
"Died of pneumonia." "Died trying to escape."

For those growers of wheat who were shot by their own wheatstacks,
For those growers of bread who were sent to the ice-locked wastes,
And their flesh remembers their fields.

For those denounced by their smug, horrible children
For a peppermint-star and the praise of the Perfect State,
For all those strangled or gelded or merely starved
To make perfect states; for the priest hanged in his cassock,
The Jew with his chest crushed in and his eyes dying,
The revolutionist lynched by the private guards
To make perfect states, in the names of the perfect states.

For those betrayed by the neighbors they shook hands with
And for the traitors, sitting in the hard chair
With the loose sweat crawling their hair and their fingers restless
As they tell the street and the house and the man's name.

And for those sitting at table in the house
With the lamp lit and the plates and the smell of food,
Talking so quietly; when they hear the cars
And the knock at the door, and they look at each other quickly
And the woman goes to the door with a stiff face,
Smoothing her dress.
"We are all good citizens here.

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We believe in the Perfect State."
And that was the last
Time Tony or Karl or Shorty came to the house
And the family was liquidated later.
It was the last time.
We heard the shots in the night
But nobody knew next day what the trouble was
And a man must go to his work. So I didn't see him
For three days, then, and me near out of my mind
And all the patrols on the streets with their dirty guns
And when he came back, he looked drunk, and the blood
was on him.

For the women who mourn their dead in the secret night,
For the children taught to keep quiet, the old children,
The children spat-on at school.
For the wrecked laboratory,
The gutted house, the dunged picture, the pissed-in well.
The naked corpse of Knowledge flung in the square
And no man lifting a hand and no man speaking.

For the cold of the pistol-butt and the bullet's heat,
For the rope that chokes, the manacles that bind,
The huge voice, metal, that lies from a thousand tubes
And the stuttering machine-gun that answers all.

For the man crucified on the crossed machine-guns
Without name, without resurrection, without stars,
His dark head heavy with death and his flesh long sour
With the smell of his many prisons—John Smith, John Doe,
John Nobody—oh, crack your mind for his name!
Faceless as water, naked as the dust.
Dishonored as the earth the gas-shells poison
And barbarous with portent.
This is he.
This is the man they ate at the green table
Putting their gloves on ere they touched the meat.
This is the fruit of war, the fruit of peace,
The ripeness of invention, the new lamb,
The answer to the wisdom of the wise.
And still he hangs, and still he will not die,
And still, on the steel city of our years
The light fails and the terrible blood streams down.

We thought we were done with these things but we were
wrong.
We thought, because we had power, we had wisdom.
We thought the long train would run to the end of Time.
We thought the light would increase.
Now the long train stands derailed and the bandits loot it.
Now the boar and the asp have power in our time.
Now the night rolls back on the West and the night is solid.
Our fathers and ourselves sowed dragon's teeth.
Our children know and suffer the armed men.

FROM "LISTEN TO THE PEOPLE"

IT'S a long way out of the past and a long way forward.
It's a tough way, too, and there's plenty of trouble in it.
It's a black storm crowding the sky and a cold wind
blowing,
Blowing upon us all.
See it and face it. That's the way it is.
That's the way it'll be for a time and a time.
Even the easy may have little ease.
Even the meek may suffer in their meekness.
But we've ridden out storms before and we'll ride out this
one,
Ride it out and get it through.
It won't be done by the greedy and the go-easies.
The stuffed shirts, the "yes but" men and the handsome
phonies,
The men who want to live in their father's pockets,
The folks who barely believe and the bitter few.
It'll be done by the river of the people,
The mountain of the people, the great plain
Grown to the wheat of the people,
Plowed by their suffering, harrowed by their hope,
Tall with their endless future.
It'll be done by the proud walker, Democracy,
The walker in proud shoes.
Get on your feet, Americans, and say it!
Forget your grievances, wherever you are,
The little yesterday's hates and the last year's discord.
This is your land, this is your independence,
This is the people's cause, the people's might.
Say it and speak it loud, United, free. . .

WHAT do the people say?
Well, you've just heard some questions and some
answers,
Not all, of course. No man can say that's all.
A man's a humbug, if he says that's all.
But look in your own minds and memories
And find out what you find and what you'd keep.
It's time we did that and it won't be earlier.
I don't know what each one of you will find,
What memory, what token, what tradition,
It may be only half a dozen words
Carved on a stone, carved deeper in the heart,
It might be all a life, but look and find it—
Sun on Key West, snow on New Hampshire Hills,
Warm rain on Georgia and the Texas wind
Blowing across an empire and all part,
All one, all indivisible and one—
Find it and keep it and hold on to it,
For there's a buried thing in all of us,
Deeper than all the noise of the parade,
The thing the haters never understand
And never will, the habit of the free.

Out of the flesh, out of the minds and hearts
Of thousand upon thousand common men,
Cranks, martyrs, starry-eyed enthusiasts
Slow-spoken neighbors, hard to push around,
Women whose hands were gentle with their kids
And men with a cold passion for mere justice.
We made this thing, this dream.
This land unsatisfied by little ways,
Open to every man who brought good will,
This peaceless vision, groping for the stars,
Not as a huge devouring machine
Rolling and clanking with remorseless force
Over submitted bodies and the dead
But as live earth where anything could grow,
Your crankiness, my notions and his dream,
Grow and be looked at, grow and live or die.
But get their change of growing and the sun.
We made it and we make it and it's ours.
We shall maintain it. It shall be sustained.

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of Literature

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STEPHEN VINCENT BENÉT

IT is too early to assess and set in its due place in American literary history the poetry of Stephen Vincent Benét. But it is not too early—indeed the sooner done, the better—to register a claim for its high importance. Whatever may happen in the inexorable years that mellow words into classics, or subject fame to attrition, we do not believe that the significance of his work will grow less.

For Stephen Benét wrote his epic "John Brown's Body" at a time when the reading of poetry among intelligent laymen had reached its low point, perhaps for all time. He wrote when his contemporaries among the poets had intellectualized their poetry beyond emotional understanding except by the élite. He wrote when poetry was making a new language for itself, and that language threatened to become unintelligible to the general audience without which poetry sooner or later becomes mere specialization.

He wrote, too, when a mounting wave of nationalism was carrying history with it, leaving his own United States without a felt poetical tradition to give realism and validity to patriotism. Like Robert Frost, he went back to the common ground; like no one else in his time in poetry, he wrote powerfully for a nation, that had not thought of itself as a united, continental nation in the last great period of American writing, when the New Englanders built a classic literature upon a region.

He was in sheer fact the poet so urgently called for by our last national poet, the first to chant songs for and of all America, Walt Whitman. And unlike Walt Whitman, whose prophetic symbolism could be read by the people only in single poems and passages, he broke through the ivory wall and was read (as Whitman prophesied some American bard would be) by the population at large. It seems probable that no writer of poetry in English has ever been read by so many in his lifetime—not even Longfellow—as was Stephen Benét. And while he was popular, he never wrote down to his public. He gave them his best, and it was good. Walt Whitman wrote:

By blue Ontario's shore,

As I mused of these warlike days and of peace return'd, and the dead that return no more,

A Phantom gigantic superb, with stern visage accosted me,

Chant me the poem, it said, *that comes from the soul of America, chant me the carol of victory, . . .*

And sing me before you go the song of the throes of Democracy,

(Democracy, the destin'd conqueror, yet treacherous lip-smiles everywhere,

And death and infidelity at every step.) . . .

To hold men together by paper and seal or by compulsion is of no account,

That only holds men together which aggregates all in a living principle, as the hold of the limbs of the body or the fibres of plants.

Of all races and eras these States with veins full of poetical stuff most need poets, and are to have the greatest, and use them the greatest. . . .

In peace out of him speaks the spirit of peace, large, rich, thrifty, . . .

In war he is the best backer of the war, he fetches artillery as good as the engineer's, he can make every word he speaks draw blood. . . .

Who are you indeed who would talk or sing to America?

Have you studied out the land, its idioms and men? . . . .

..... Are you really of the whole people?

Are you not of some coterie? some school or mere religion?

Are you done with reviews and criticisms of life? . . . .

Rhymes and rhymers pass away, poems distill'd from poems pass away, . . .

Admirers, importers, obedient persons make but the soil of literature, . . .

America justifies itself, . . .

If its poets appear it will in due time advance to meet them, there is no fear of mistake,

(The proof of a poet shall be sternly deferr'd till his country absorbs him as affectionately as he has absorb'd it).

His country has done so and with a lasting affection. Courageous, sweet-voiced, American-minded Stephen Benét has taken his place among the bards of the great Idea of a democracy building a future upon the ideals of its past. He is, perhaps, the first of the poets prophesied by Whitman. It is significant of a spiritual relationship between these two spokesmen for our country, that his unpublished epic poem to succeed "John Brown's Body," happily completed in part, is named from a poem addressed by Whitman to that other spokesman for America, Abraham Lincoln. "O Western Star" is the title of the new poem. Whitman's line from which the words are taken expresses the feeling of many of us for Stephen Benét himself and the loss we have suffered:

"O powerful western fallen star!"

H. S. C.

Of Quick American Light

By Jeremy Ingalls

APPALACHIANS ride upon his shoulders,
The deep-corn plains wear foot-track of his gaze,
The transverse rivers cradle him; beholders
To him beholden in the quickening phrase,

Beholden knowledge accurate and tender,
Outwitting devil's wit and giant stride,
Grappling twin-bagged seas and salt; we render
Our motley continent his saga pride.

His eyes are praise. His hands are understanding.
He renders us ourselves. He is. The past,
Present frontier forever ours; our landing
On rock his service, all our gear made fast.

The skeleton in flesh articulated,
His soul, our substance by his love conferred,
Ultimate nation of his being, mated
Protagonist, bearing his creative word.

In 1941, as editor of the Yale Series of Younger Poets, Stephen Vincent Benét chose Jeremy Ingalls's manuscript as the outstanding one of the year.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

What Happened?

SIR:—During the summer of 1918 while occupying a dugout close to devastated Ypres in Belgium, I came across a book left by some former tenant. At that time our division (the 30th) was attached to a British Army Corps and we relieved and were relieved by English, Scotch, Australian, and Canadian troops in turn.

I had only completed half the book when orders came to advance, and the unfinished book was left behind. Since then, almost a quarter of a century has passed by and I still find myself wondering about the conclusion. Only a few meagre details of the story are remembered, which I will proceed to give hoping they will be enough to identify it to some of your readers.

Told in the first person, it was the story of revenge to be exacted upon a relative or associate who had caused the narrator to be wrongfully imprisoned. After his release or escape from prison the narrator made an effort to free himself of all of his former acquaintances until he could reappear completely, changed in speech, bearing, and appearance. The method of disguise was very elaborate and was described lengthily. Especially do I remember how, by introduction of metal into his mouth, the hero managed to completely change the tone of his voice. These are the only details of the story which I recall. I will be eternally grateful to you if you can aid me in identifying this book.

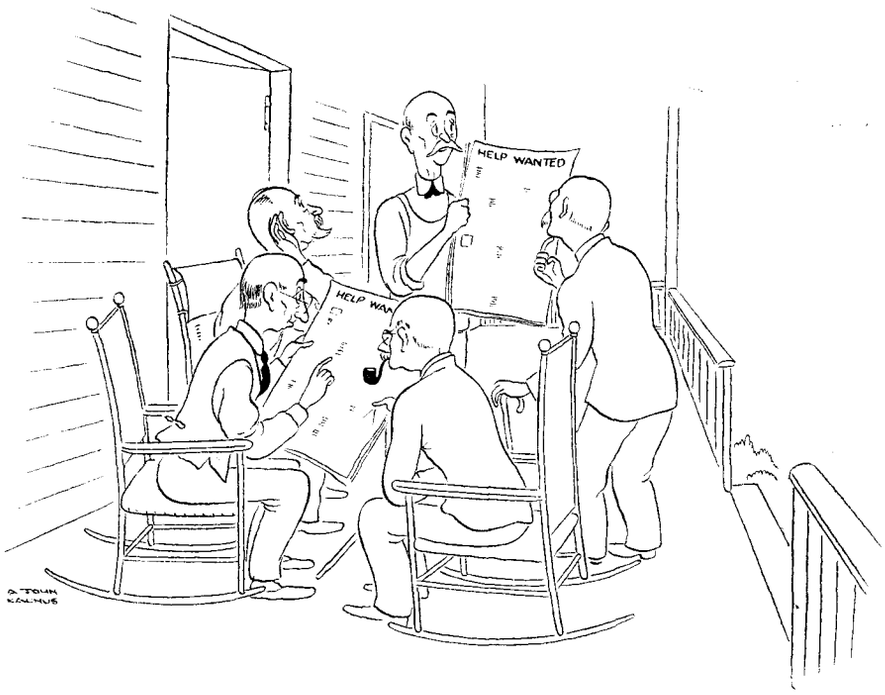
ALFRED H. ISELEY.

c/o U. S. Engineer Corps
Punahou Campus
Honolulu, T. H.

Finnegan's Teeth

SIR:—Your recent seizure of Thornton Wilder "emerging from an uninventoried treasure cave with a pouch full of sparklers" moves me to report that I have caught him doing mayhem on André Obey's "Le Viol de Lucrece." (Mayhem, meaning "maiming by depriving a person of the use of members necessary for self-defense.") When Cornell, hoping to repeat the fine performance of Obey's play by Les Quinze, put herself into Thornton Wilder's hands, the play was a flop and all the critics gave Obey the blame.

Wilder had not given Obey credit on the cover of the published book, only on the title-page. It would be hard to discover Obey's lusty homespun play in the banal billowy English which Cornell's cast found so baffling. That a professed translator should misrepresent the author in tone is a more serious indictment, isn't it, than that he should make elementary mistakes such as rendering "Jaloux de qui?" as "Jealous of what?" or using "frog" as



a term of insult, even though Le Petit Larousse illustrates Obey's "crapaud?"

It seems to me even more surprising that a man who has written plays should omit vital speeches, rearrange and transpose scenes, destroy small precisions of the author's in the order of epithets, should compose lines which suggest she-sells-seashells—for instance saying of two hearts beating in juxtaposition, "each is as loud, each is as fast as the other." That he should make Lucrece say, alone, after the rape, "Myself. The very heart of myself is gone" when Obey's Lucrece had moaned, "My honey is lost. The treasure of my summer." That her "Pauvre femme!" should become, of all senseless things, "Poor child!" Cornell could have made the whole play a tragic comment on humanity with her "Poor woman!"

Delicate deletion seems to have been Wilder's slogan. His version might be used in the schoolroom of a female academy. He even omits the word "rape" from the title. He leaves out the sweaty smell of Tarquin's armpits. Lucrece's "shriek" becomes "hides her face in woe." The bed is "all disarranged" though Obey's verb is the one by which the French describe the overthrow of a state.

Obey's climaxes are lost. The litany intoned between Lucrece and the Narratress—Wilder calls her merely "the Second narrator," by the way, missing the structural value of the male and female narrators throughout—that litany slows down from:

"By courtesy!"
"By charity!"
"By my spilling tears!" to
"By the grace of courtesy!"
"By the laws of chivalry!"
"I implore you by my tears!"

And when the Narrator describes Tarquin's ride to Rome, working up to a high pitch:

"He's off! Tarquin is off! The king's son has quit the army! The future king of the Romans is abandoning the camp, deserting his post, leaving the war itself in the lurch!" Wilder says (adagio adagio) "Tarquin has called for his horse (he did that two pages back) and has left the camp. My lord Tarquin, the king's son, the future king of Rome, has left the camp and the army behind him."

Poor Tarquin is deprived of several of his few good lines, but he seems most unlucky in having to be compared to "a wolf serenading wild beasts." Larousse again could make that cryptic passage clear by revealing that bêtes farouches "deer."

I wonder Cornell did not become suspicious of the translation when she was required to ask her maids for "the black dress my mother wore in mourning" instead of "the dress I wore to mourn my mother." And when Wilder's maid merely "hands" her the dress, instead of, as the French idiom has it, "puts it on" her.

I charge Thornton Wilder with having made off with a good copper cooking pot, leaving a brummagem pair of candle-sticks (wobbly, too) in their place. With having converted a leaping granite-cleaving mountain brook into a meander in a soppy meadow. With having deprived André Obey of members necessary for his self-defense.

KAREN BARRETT.

5859 Freeman Avenue,
La Crescenta, Calif.

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The Personal Historian Returns

BETWEEN THE THUNDER AND THE SUN. By Vincent Sheean. New York: Random House. 1943. 428 *pp., with name index.* $3.

Reviewed by PAUL SCHUBERT

VINCENT ("Jimmy") SHEEAN gets around. In his capacity as a "name" foreign correspondent, he meets everybody and goes everywhere. He writes despatches for top newspapers; at regular intervals he writes books itemizing the places he has visited and the "names" with whom he has dealt, and then he comes home and lectures across the length and breadth of the land. Just now the lecturing and foreign corresponding are off for the duration, as the author has been a Major in the U. S. Army Air Force since last May.

"Between the Thunder and the Sun" covers the period between 1935 and early 1942—a period in which an entire world was engulfed by war. The narrative of this era must ultimately become, as the facts are revealed and seen with perspective, one of the great historic dramas of all time. We have been living through a power-contest between titans—between super-personalities of politics, industry, and the military who have risen up out of the ruck of mankind to wield entire states as weapons—equally between great inchoate masses of men and women who find themselves pitted against "the enemy," fighting for their lives and their futures as war blasts into the streets of great cities and the fields of fertile countrysides.

Mr. Sheean's account of this era has something the atmosphere of a volume of Palace Memoirs. Mr. Sheean assures us that he is a born Middle Westerner, and that he is deeply touched by the struggle and sweating toil of mankind. But he tells us frankly that by preference he lives and moves in the world of aristocracy, wealth, and privilege—the great glamorous "inside" world that seems to do most of the string-pulling. One after another of this world's "greats" is paraded before us in close association with Mr. Sheean—Maxine Elliott, Winston Churchill, Sir Johnston Forbes-Robertson (his father-in-law), G.B.S., Juan Negrin . . . name after name, great house after great house, city after city across Europe, America, and Asia.

> Saturday night after dinner I had a fairly sharp tilt with the Archduke Robert of Austria on the subject of the Red Army, on which he claimed special information. I had none and claimed none, but Maisky (and also Benes) had given me considerable confidence in it. I was therefore surprised to hear the Archduke state that it was without modern equipment, devoid of discipline or spirit, and certain to collapse in any real test against the Germans. The Archduke was young, but like many other royalties he had superb confidence in the validity of his own prejudices.

This portrayal of events as seen by a world of manners and polish, in which it is bad form to reveal particular depths of emotions, lends to Mr. Sheean's book a curiously emotionless character. Certainly Mr. Sheean's own emotions must have been stirred far more deeply than he allows us to feel. He seems far more concerned that we judge him by the soundness of his forecast that a great and total war was brewing, and by what he obviously feels is a unique oneness with the very great.

> The deep and unspoken sympathy I have always felt with Mr. H. G. Wells is due, I think, to this characteristic (or peculiarity) which we have in common. He moves in the society of the rich, the great, the privileged, without for one moment forgetting either the kitchen stairs at Bromley or the supreme purposes for which he has lived. In my less effective or enduring way, I think the same is true of me.

"Between the Thunder and the Sun" opens at Salzburg and passes swiftly to Maxine Elliott's villa on the Cote d'Azur, pointing up the artificial glitter of Europe's seasonable resorts of fashion as symbolic of what was about to be blasted to eternity—neglecting the great suffering mass of European humanity which formed the true Dramatis Personae of events.

The outbreak of war, the fall of France, the air "blitz" on England. . . . Mr. Sheean, viewing America as an outsider, felt unable to convey to America, in writings or broadcasts, the factual urgencies of the sights before him. The fact was, he had lost touch, as men so often do when they live too long away and in environments that take them out of their own land and its way of thinking. He thought he knew what America was thinking—what he could not feel was the perspective that made many of America's judgments more sound, historically, than those of people caught in the surf of Armageddon.

Vincent Sheean

The Hess Affair, the German attack upon Russia . . . that autumn of 1941, Mr. Sheean flew out to the Far East, went to Chungking, added Generalissimo and Mme. Chiang Kai-shek to the "names" of this book . . . flew home inches ahead of the hot blast that seared Pearl Harbor, Manila, Wake. . . .

And at the end he seems to be rediscovering America in his contact with men who are doing things instead of talking about them, instead of string-pulling to make others do things.

The reality of American aviators, construction men, a sense of American power, of the destiny wrapped up in America's mastery of the gasoline-engine . . . the book closes on that note, and on a Mr. Sheean humbler than the man who clashes wills with Maxine Elliott in Chapter I by steadfastly refusing to change into bathing apparel during the hours consecrated to the Elliott villa's pool.

Paul Schubert, radio news analyst and newspaper columnist, lived for eight years in Europe. He is a graduate of the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis. His most recent book is "Sea Power in Conflict."

The Imponderable Gift

By Dilys Bennett Laing

I SHUT my eyes, stretched out my hand
and touched the fingers of a friend—
a friend I had not known was there—
a friend I had not known at all.
I opened my eyes on empty air
and softly in my hand there fell
a flower not plucked from anywhere.

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STEPHEN VINCENT BENÉT

1898-1943

JOHN BROWN'S BODY (1928)

BALLADS AND POEMS (1931)

A BOOK OF AMERICANS (1933)
(With Rosemary Benét)

BURNING CITY (1936)

THE DEVIL AND DANIEL WEBSTER (1937)

THIRTEEN O'CLOCK (1937)

JOHNNY PYE AND THE FOOL KILLER (1938)

TALES BEFORE MIDNIGHT (1939)

NIGHTMARE AT NOON (1940)

SING A SONG OF AMERICANS (1942)
(With Rosemary Benét)

THEY BURNED THE BOOKS (1942)

THE SELECTED WORKS OF STEPHEN VINCENT BENÉT (1942)

TWO VOLUMES. The prose volume includes his novel, *Spanish Bayonet*, his most famous short story, *The Devil and Daniel Webster*, and 21 other stories. The poetry volume includes *John Brown's Body* and what Mr. Benét considered to be his best shorter poems, grouped under these headings: *Young Adventure, My Fair Lady, Ballads and Tales, Creatures of Earth, Nightmares and Visitants.*

This is a list of Mr. Benét's books which are in print as of March, 1943

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Word Empire, B. H.

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE HOUSE OF ULLSTEIN. By Herman Ullstein. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1943. 308 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by F. C. WEISKOPF

BY the time Hitler came into power the five brothers Ullstein ruled a real publishing empire. There was a joke current in Berlin newspaper circles about three lions escaping from the zoo, invading the Ullstein house in *Kochstrasse,* and spending hours devouring a number of directors without anyone noticing that these men were missing. In 1933, the army of Ullstein employees numbered 10,000; their annual salaries amounted to twenty-three millions of marks; the cost of paper consumption reached a figure no less high; while the yearly turnover ran into seventy odd million marks. The three big papers, *Berliner Morgenpost, B. Z. am Mittag,* and *Vossiche Zeitung,* passed every day into the hands of more than one million readers mostly in the capital; the weekly *Berliner Illustrierte* reached more than two millions in the whole Reich. The flood of Ullstein magazines swept into every village and town; there were periodicals for housewives and children, for gardeners and gourmets, for lovers of snobbish literature and for consumers of a rather primitive humor. And there was no bookstand to be found without those yellow cardboard volumes of the one-mark *Ullsteinbücher.*

Yes, Herman Ullstein, one of the five brothers, and author of a book about their big enterprise, is right in stating that the house of Ullstein "had become the greatest representative of public opinion" in the Germany of Wilhelm II and of the Weimar Republic. He adds however: "Perhaps we also have to share the blame for not having made sufficient use of the power we ourselves had created." Here he is right again although he understates very much the guilt of the German liberal press in pre-Hitler Germany,—that twofold guilt of not helping to make democracy really live, and of not fighting the rising wave of Nazism with the necessary conviction and strength.

It would have been precisely the detailed and merciless story of that failure (leading subsequently to the thoroughly unsuccessful attempt to weather the Hitler storm by appeasement and collaboration) which would have made Herman Ullstein's book an invaluable source of education and instruction. But that is perhaps too exacting a demand in view of the fact that the house of Ullstein tried to do business with Goebbels until shortly after Hindenburg's death.

Thus Herman Ullstein's book remains in its best parts a family success story and a vivid description of the development of the press in the times of the "Second Reich" and the Weimar Republic. The chapters dealing with German history in general, and with the Nazi period especially are too sketchy and superficial. But the reader will find throughout the book a rich number of instructive facts and anecdotes about the making of Europe's largest publishing firm, from its humble beginnings in 1877, when Leopold Ullstein bought the small local sheet *Berliner Zeitung,* until the day of the forced sale of the Ullstein stock to some anonymous bank accomplices of the robber firm Hitler-Aman which owns by now eighty-five per cent of all German newspapers and publishing houses.

Literary Show-Piece

THE ART OF WORLDLY WISDOM. By Balthasar Gracian. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1943. 196 *pp.* $1.50.

Reviewed by DORSEY GIBBS

IN the seventeenth century Balthasar Gracian, a Spanish nobleman, Jesuit, and teacher, wrote a book of maxims—"The Art of Worldly Wisdom"—a book so rich in the art of human relations that it remains one of the show-pieces of all literature. A man of experience whose wit sparkled at the dinners of Philip III, Gracian was well fitted to be an apostle of *savoir faire.*

This is perhaps the most remarkable of all *how* books. Gracian charts a prudent course toward success; his formula requires a stiff program of self-improvement, application, and discipline. He has only contempt for those who "prance through the first compliments" then to be forced into a vacuous silence. These he compares to houses that are all frontage, and calls them "chameleons of applause."

Gracian coined the phrase "men of good-will"; and of freedom he said—"it is more precious than any gifts for which you may be tempted to give it up."

The Flying Poles

SQUADRON 303: The Polish Fighter Squadron with the R.A.F. By Arkady Fiedler. New York: Roy, Publishers. 1943. 182 *pp.* $2.

Reviewed by HENRY C. WOLFE

THIS is the story of Poland's fighting flyers as typified by the Polish Fighter Squadron with the R.A.F. Squadron 303 is the old Kosciuszko Squadron *redivivus.* The original Kosciuszko Squadron was formed in 1919 by a group of Americans who volunteered to help Poland defend her frontiers against outside aggression.

Poland's fighting airmen are in the tradition of her storied cavalry that time and time again saved Europe's civilization from annihilation. It is fitting that these cavalrymen of the air should have played a significant part in the Battle of Britain. Their country was the first to be destroyed by the barbarian hordes of Nazism. In defending England they realized that the fate of civilization was at stake. They fought for Britain, therefore, as if they were defending their fatherland.

The author tells his story simply, graphically, without heroics. The glorious facts speak for themselves. Squadron 303 bagged 126 enemy planes in the Battle of Britain, was top scorer at Dieppe. One of the leading English air chiefs says that the flying Poles have only two speeds: top speed and full speed. He has asked for three Poles for every squadron. According to Prime Minister Winston Churchill, the R.A.F. is "unanimous in presenting the laurel wreath to the Polish Air Force."

That is not to say that the Polish airmen are reckless daredevils, heedless of their own lives. They are cool, calculating fighters. Their casualties in the Battle of Britain were relatively much lower than those of other pilots. Their bomber crews coöperate efficiently with their British comrades in arms. But in downing the Luftwaffe, the exiles from Poland are hell-bent on avenging their shattered fatherland. In taking it out on the Dorniers and Messerschmitts, Polish freemen are again stemming the tide of barbarism.

This little book makes stirring reading. And it is a natural for boys, much more thrilling and provocative than the tales of derring-do combat flying put out by the fiction writers. Librarians are going to find their circulation figures zooming when they put Fiedler's "Squadron 303" in the juvenile department.

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The Colonel Comes Home

COLONEL EFFINGHAM'S RAID. By Berry Fleming. New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce. 1943. 279 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by RICHARD R. PLANT

COLONEL EFFINGHAM is raiding Main Street, but Main Street's defense hits back and the raider becomes the victim of his own attack. Christened W. Seaborn Effingham, some sixty-odd years before he starts his last campaign against corruption, inertia, and the smooth efficiency of the Home Folks courthouse gang, the Colonel (United States Army, retired) has come home to his sleepy native town only to find that the democratic way of life has gone sour and that the citizens have resignedly accepted the rule of political grafters. The campaign, described in military terms until the very end, starts as an adventure of a ridiculous crusader and ends as a deeply moving war-journal of an honest but defeated general who lacked adequate resources for his just fight. For, despite the humorous trimmings, the deft satire, the enchanting witticisms, this novel by Berry Fleming is a novel of defeat, resignation, and David against Goliath with Goliath as victor.

This doesn't mean that Berry Fleming gives us the South as a panorama of hell, heat, and frustration, peopled by weird degenerates in the manner of certain contemporaries; but his humour is deceiving, his casual remarks have an acid tincture, and his satire is occasionally as biting as Swift's. The story circles around a venerable courthouse, a monument to a glorious past and to the more courageous forbears, that is a bit timeworn and in need of repair. The local politicians seize the opportunity to get money from the WPA to build a new one with fat profits for contractors, architects, and everybody involved. Colonel Effingham, through his column on military affairs in *The Leader*, advocates the retention of the courthouse, proves that it can be repaired easily, rouses the citizens to a rally —and is finally defeated because he underestimated the resources of a cunning enemy. The political machine is victorious, the citizens continue to live under the rule of the gang, and trees will never be planted in Main Street because they would overshadow the neon-signs of the merchants.

Like every history of a battle, "Colonel Effingham's Raid" has suspense, surprises, retreats, and keeps the reader on the alert. Berry Fleming describes the campaign through the

Berry Fleming

eyes of the Colonel's nephew, a prematurely tired newspaper reporter, who sees his uncle's campaign as a slightly grotesque Don Quixoterie, and can hardly understand anyone's putting up an honest fight without getting something out of it for himself. The technique gives the author the chance for some of the wittiest and wisest remarks on small-time politics to be read in a long time; the nephew is so accustomed to the smooth rotations of the political machine that he can say the most revealing things in the direct and naive manner of an "enfant terrible," which is highly amusing. It is, unfortunately, all too amusing. The cynicism of the reporter, his defeatism as far as the democratic way of life is concerned, his lack of courage and his permanent fear of losing his $22.50-a-week job color the story too thoroughly, and the Colonel does not emerge sufficiently as a personality of his own.

Several times the author describes phases of the Colonel's battle directly, without the commentary of *The Leader's* local reporter. But on the whole the Colonel doesn't come enough into his own, and the satirical style endangers the seriousness of the hero's campaign for better government. But the adversaries, the politicians and local grafters, the meek followers and the paid experts are drawn with deft, careful strokes, and here Fleming's satirical talent can hardly be beaten. The satire is never loud or revengeful. The nephew reporter doesn't miss a trick in local politics, habits, and paradoxes, and he also knows how to make good copy of it or to bury it in understanding silence. The unimportant love affair, involving Ella Sue, the radically inclined society editor somewhat of *The Leader,* gets off to a late start and is strangely unconvincing. The nephew falls for Ella Sue's legs, but one doesn't know what she is falling for, unless it is his National Guard's uniform.

It goes without saying that Mr. Fleming, native Southerner, knows all the little details, shades of speech, mannerisms, and local habits that lend credulity to the story. One can smell Main Street, one feels definitely the need for trees—even if they would hide the merchant's neon signs—and one can only hope that the war, with its tremendous changes on the domestic front, will make a second raid on Main Street's politicians more effective, in case Colonel Effingham should try again, inveterate fighter that he is.

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, and Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
THE AFFAIR OF THE JADE MONKEY *Clifford Knight* (Dodd, Mead: $2.)	Fatalities in Yosemite National Park put Huntoon Rogers on trail of killer who finally tips his mitt.	Outdoor Western background invigorating, characters enjoyable, and plot heads up to an unusually well maneuvred finish.	Good grade
THERE WAS AN OLD WOMAN *Ellery Queen* (Little, Brown: $2.)	Rococo Riverside Drive mansion of shoe mfgr's. widow scene of murders which bring success—and love—to Mr. Queen.	Mother Goose idea well tied into plot, Mr. Queen and his myrmidons characteristically canny and solution has neat twist.	Very good
DEATH OF AN ANGEL *M. P. Rea* (Crime Club: $2.)	Angelically garbed singer in dept. store Christmas celebration mysteriously slain. Lieut. Powledge links odd clues to solve it.	Employees of big mercantile establishment keenly sketched. Murderer is elusive enough to keep suspense high until surprise windup.	Agreeable
CATSPAW FOR MURDER *D. B. Olson* (Crime Club: $2.)	Observant spinster helps country police lieut. pierce murder plot that rattles family skeletons.	Amateur sleuthess runs into violence in high tension yarn with shuddery finish.	Entertaining

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TRADE Winds

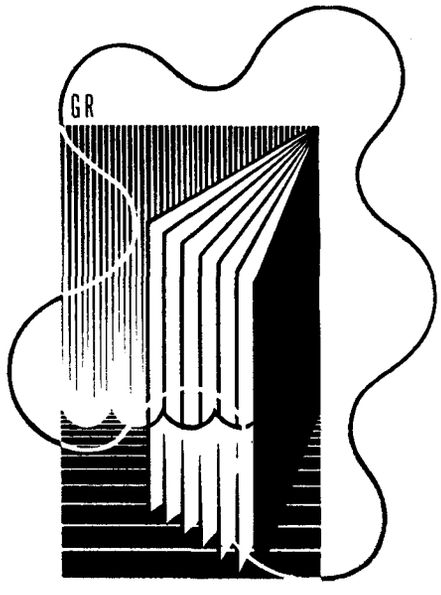
TWO OF THE MOST exciting manuscripts that I have read in twenty years of publishing are locked up in our Random House safe tonight, marked "mustn't touch." One of them is Eugene O'Neill's unproduced play, "The Iceman Cometh," which will not be published until the author comes East to supervise its production on Broadway. The other is the most breathtaking war story of them all, but it describes an action that has not yet been released by the government for publication. Each day's delay is subtle torture, but we can do nothing but wait and pray for Washington to flash a green light. Meanwhile our Spring list is in galley form, I have read every one of our new books that I have intended to, and now I've started to catch up on a few of the books that my fellow publishers are shouting about. . . .

CLOSE TO THE TOP of anybody's reading list should go the new "Imperative," John Hersey's "Into the Valley," a terse and Stephen Crane-ish story of a battle on Guadalcanal. "If people at home," says Hersey, "could feel for an hour the feelings of Captain Rigaud, his men, and myself when we went into that jungle valley, or even just know about them, I think we would be an inch or two closer to winning the war." My own "imperative" recommendation for the month is John Whitaker's brilliant and provocative "We Cannot Escape History." These two volumes are the kind that the Council on Books in Wartime had in mind when it coined the phrase "Books Are Bullets!" . . .

LITTLE, BROWN have uncovered another top-notch writer of thrillers in Margaret Carpenter, whose first novel, "Experiment Perilous," is the Literary Guild selection for April. The climax is as involved as one of Elizabeth Kingsley's "Double Crostics," but by the time you've reached it you're too limp too care. This is a book in the best "Angel Street" manner. . . . Theodore Pratt's "Mr. Winkle" achieves precisely the war triumph that every frustrated civilian of forty-four and over dreams up for himself in his morning tub. The story is a natural for Hollywood, and has, in fact, been snapped up already for Columbia Pictures. We nominate Roland Young for the part of Mr. Winkle. . . . H. Allen Smith's "Life in a Putty Knife Factory" has its full share of high spots. One of them is the note at the back of the book: "The liveliness and grace of the typography are directly attributable to the craftsmanship of three printers named Sam, Terence, and Giambattista, one of whom was a little drunk and none of whom appeared to be amused. The paper on which the book is printed was made out of trees. Real trees" . . .

QUENTIN REYNOLDS is off on a new safari that will take him to Russia, China, and India. . . . Louis Untermeyer writes that he is planning a Victory Garden book which he means to call "Weed 'Em—and Reap." We know that poison gas has been outlawed by international covenant, but what's to stop the War Department sending Untermeyer and Ben Huebsch abroad to bombard Berchtesgaden with a series of their typical and shattering puns? We don't think the Nazis could take it! . . . Tom Coward believes that "The Little Locksmith," by Katharine Butler Hathaway (who died on Christmas Eve), is "about the biggest find he ever had anything to do with." Part of the book has been appearing in the *Atlantic Monthly*. Coward-McCann are betting on 100,000 copies! . . .

THE COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESS has just published W. Cabell Greet's recommended pronunciations of "War Words" which will be a boon to news commentators, both professional and amateur, who have been wrestling with jawbreakers like Reyksjavik, Prokhladnenski, and Kandalakskaya Guba for months on end. . . . Helen Hull, the author of "Circle in the Water," has been one of Madame Chiang's right-hand women during her stay in America. John Day is preparing a volume of Madame Chiang's talks under the title of "We Chinese Women," and a companion collection of the Generalissimo's talks under the title of "All We Are and All We Have" . . . . Jean Breig, of the John Winston Company, reports that Japanese interned in various camps in the West and Middle West are proving to be great customers for the Culbertson bridge books. One man has reordered the same book four times. They can study Culbertson all they please, but we do not think anybody is going to catch us vulnerable again for a long, long time. . . . Katharine Scherman, of *Life*, will be married on April tenth to Axel Rosin, an executive of the Virginia Oak Tannery. Her father, crinkly-eyed Harry Scherman, continues, *Time* tells us, to guide the destinies of the U. S. Post Office's fourth largest customer. (The official standing: the U. S. Government; Sears, Roebuck; Montgomery Ward; Book-of-the-Month Club.) . . . .



LITERARY COCKTAIL PARTIES aren't what they used to be when Brander Matthews and I were boys. The revolution occurred when somebody—I think it was myself—made the happy discovery that nowhere, nowhere at all, was there a law that forbade the presence of a couple of good-looking gals at shindigs designed primarily to introduce an author and his new book. Take the little jamboree that Edward Bernays tossed off for Joe Freeman recently as a case in point. Joe, whom I have admired ever since we went to college together, has launched his new novel, "Never Call Retreat," via Farrar and Rinehart, and to commemorate the occasion, Mr. Bernays assembled the crême de la crême of literary society. The crême that I loved best were Elissa Landi, Sylvia Lyons, and Mrs. Billy Rose (Eleanor Holm to you). I failed to get a bead on "Never Call Retreat," but I had a lot of fun. . . . Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Duryea are doing what they can to emphasize what may be a new trend by combining book reviews with matinee dances—plus a de-luxe buffet—at the Hotel des Artistes, on 67th Street. "The Gaunt Woman" was reviewed on Sunday, March seventh, for instance, at three P.M.; thirty minutes later the whole assemblage was beating 'em, daddy, eight to the bar. . . .

BROADWAY . . . The musical version of Lynn Riggs's "Green Grow the Lilacs" is called "Oklahoma" and marks the first collaboration of two New York favorites — Oscar Hammerstein and Richard Rodgers. At least two numbers from a rich score will soon be

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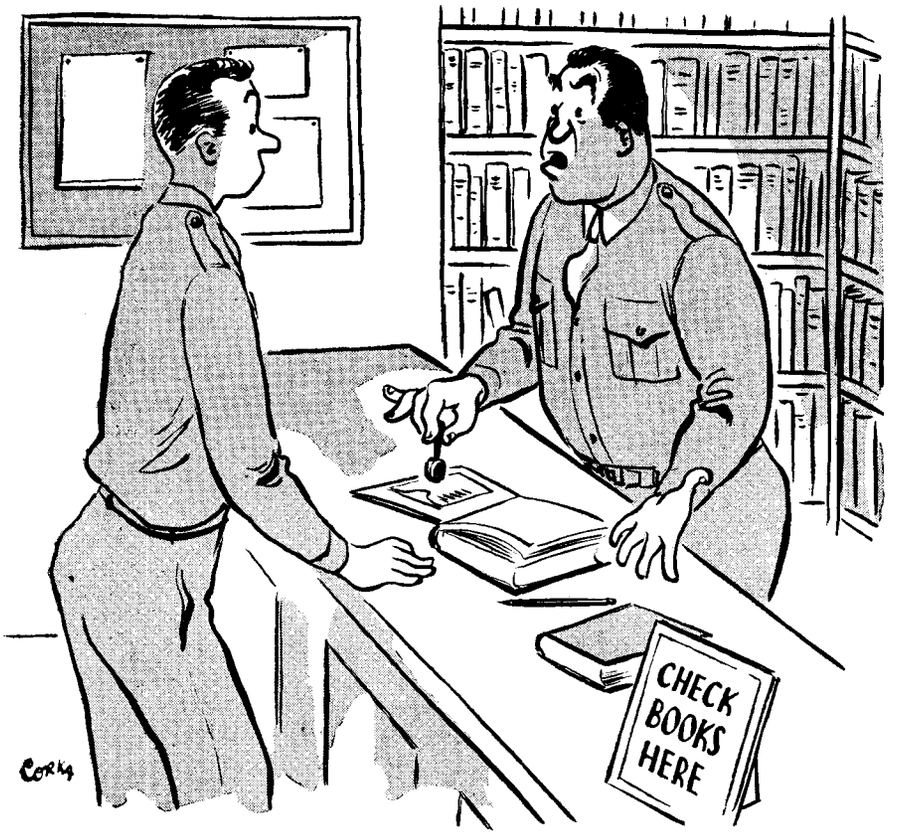
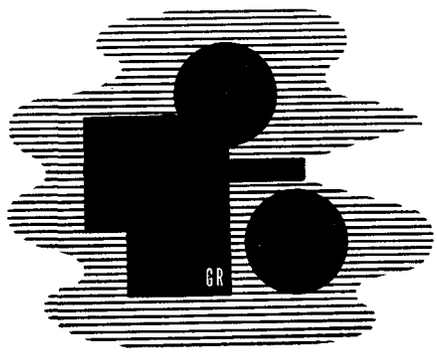


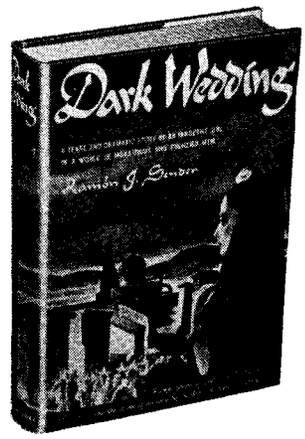
"Sarge heard I'd subscribed to *The Saturday Review of Literature*. Now look at me!"

on the hit parade: "Boys and Girls" and "People Will Say We're in Love" . . . Helen Hayes's inspired acting has made "Harriet" a hit, although I found the play itself pedestrian and wearisome. Outside of the fact that she wrote "Uncle Tom's Cabin," Mrs. Stowe's life provided little material for stirring drama. . . . The funniest ten minutes in a New York theatre today are provided by Bobby Clark in his time-honored courtroom scene in "Star and Garter." I know the routine almost by heart by this time, but Clark, one of the great clowns of our generation, still panics me with his hilarious antics. Now that a tassel-tossing abomination has been eliminated from "Star and Garter" by request of Commissioner Moss and practically everybody else, it's a show to which you can safely escort Aunt Minnie from Portland, although it might be wise to slip her a snifter or two on the way in just to be on the safe side. . . . "The Patriots" and "The Eve of Saint Mark" are the two leading candidates at the moment for this year's Pulitzer Play Award. Funniest comedies of the year: "The Doughgirls," and "Kiss and Tell." Most provocative: "The Skin of Our Teeth." Hardest to wangle tickets for: "Something for the Boys." Old standbys still going strong, and worth seeing at least twice: "Life with Father," "Junior Miss," "Arsenic and Old Lace." New writing talent discovered: none. . . .

I WONDER IF Frank Sullivan remembers the time that a distinguished University professor invited us to a stag party in the Village for a series of "feelthy moom peetchers" that he claimed had been left with him for safekeeping by a Rhodes scholar? Frank and I stuck it for about three reels, and then sneaked out into the night, ashamed to look at each other, and toying with the notion of seeking a first-rate fumigating plant. The other evening, Herr Professor called again. The Rhodes scholar had evidently turned in a new set of texts. I suddenly thought of an old Voltaire anecdote which ended the conversation, I thought, on just the right note. Voltaire, it appears, was invited one night to participate in an orgy by a notoriously dissolute group of Parisians. He went, and gave such a satisfactory account of himself that the very next night he was asked to come again. "Ah no, my friends," said Voltaire with a slight smile. "Once: a philosopher; twice: a pervert!" . . .

BENNETT CERF.





ERNEST HEMINGWAY says:

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SENDER served under the Republic in the Spanish War, is now living in exile. His DARK WEDDING reflects the battle for power in the world today, picturing the adventures of a young girl and a resolute man in a penal colony off the coast of Mexico. High-voltage action and suspense make this an exciting tropical melodrama.

Dark Wedding

by Ramón J. Sender

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The Phenomena of the Beginning

DARKNESS AND THE DEEP. By Vardis Fisher. New York: The Vanguard Press. 1943. 296 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by THOMAS SUGRUE

VARDIS FISHER has chosen for his very considerable literary talents a very considerable fictional task. He has decided to write a family saga encompassing the history of man, beginning with prehistoric nomads and ending with whatever is left of contemporary humanity after the present military engagement. He doesn't know whether he will have the time and energy to finish the epic, but he's going to go as far as he can. In this first volume he gets the earth created and cooled, brings life out of the sea, gets our ancestor down from the trees, and gives him a club.

It is his contention that the great discoveries which modern science has made concerning the origin and early experiences of man are locked away from the average citizen in text books and technical studies. Pondering this, he concluded that if such knowledge were put into the most popular form of literature, *i.e.,* the novel, it would reach a general audience, and be absorbed into the national consciousness, where it might do some good by giving the voters in a democracy a better knowledge of themselves and their problems. Obviously, Mr. Fisher doesn't hope to accomplish all that by himself. What he hopes for is a trend, and if "Darkness and the Deep" is an example of what can be accomplished by putting the popularization of science into the hands of creative writers, that trend is something to be devoutly desired. The first forty-eight pages of the book, comprising a description of the birth of the world and the beginnings of life upon it, could with profit be inserted at the opening of all general science textbooks. It has style, compression, clarity, and a beauty of language which gives to its material what literature gives to anything it touches—subjective meaning for the reader.

That has been the poet's main function: he is a link between the intellectuals who lead the way through the labyrinth of evolution, and the masses who follow them at a safe distance. Thus Mr. Fisher, in his new project, follows a literary tradition.

He follows a scientific tradition in leaving God out of creation. This is not irreligious, or atheistic, or even skeptical. The most primary cause which science can discover is only the effect of another cause; no finite mind can follow the trail back to its origin. Therefore science remains objective, recording what it observes, and what it can safely deduce. When the earth was flung off from the sun it was a mere detail in the happenings of the infinite, and all the things that have transpired since on the small planet are only minutiae of this detail. From the beginnings of its life the earth contained within itself all of its destiny, Mr. Fisher says, and the seeds of all its forms of life and their histories. This is good enough to satisfy both the theologians and the scientists, and it affords an admirable foundation for the story the author intends to tell. As to an ultimate meaning:

> If we are only the blind driven down to the seas, it would be a senseless pain to look back upon the dark and bloody trail which we have followed. If beyond our perishing in our present form, when our earth shall have finished its cycle, and shall have had its cold stone drawn back to the incandescent womb—if, then, all that was best in us shall become part of another world in another time, using not the pettiness of our personality but the stuff of our dreams, we can believe that nothing we have suffered has been in vain. If this is so, then a look backward upon our path becomes an adventure in self-discovery which the intelligence of man owes to his spirit, and the dark and brutal past becomes a searchlight that we can turn upon the future.

So the story begins, with a man named Wuh, who is a little frustrated, a little cowardly, and a little intelligent. He desires, and finally gets, a girl named Murah, who is also a little intelligent. When the tale opens they and their companion men and women have no language, do not know the use of weapons or fire, do not live in shelters, have no sense of right and wrong, and know nothing of the mysteries of life and death, old age, love, fellowship, mutual endeavor, or bathing. Wuh and Murah between them, and out of their necessities, learn to throw stones and wield clubs, build rude shelters, and speak half a dozen fundamental words. Wuh also, without realizing it, takes his first bath and absorbs the theory of mass attack on an enemy by observing the ants. As the book ends he feels the first vague stirrings of fellowship.

It is a tribute to Mr. Fisher's skill as a novelist that with these simple characters he has fashioned an absorbing narrative, putting into it an amazing amount of scientific knowledge without detracting in the slightest from the movement of the plot, which centers, as it does in all novels, around the emotional lives of the performers. This latter fact may cause some readers to feel sad, reflecting that they haven't advanced much since Wuh's time. Well, they haven't, so far as appetites are concerned, for these are basic things, but they have given to food and sex what poor dignity and rudimentary grace they can. Perhaps there will be more balm for the ego in the future volumes of the series, which are bound to be interesting and illuminating.

Your Literary I. Q.

By Howard Collins

LAST LINES OF PLAYS

Some plays have such distinctive last lines that the playgoer never forgets them. Don't you remember the 10 that are listed below? Allowing 5 points for each play you identify, and another 5 for naming either the playwright or the speaker of the line, a score of 60 is par, 70 is very good, and 80 or better is excellent. Answers are on page 26.

1. "Mr. Stanley, I am suing you for three hundred and fifty thousand dollars!"
2. "The son of a bitch stole my watch!"
3. "Fog, fog, fog, all bloody time. You can't see vhere you vas goin', no. Only dat ole davil, sea—she knows!"
4. "Hm. . . . Eleven o'clock in Grover's Corners. You get a good rest, too. Good night."
5. "Well, Sir, here we are again. We want to say thanks once more for everything You've done for us. . . . We've all got our health and as far as anything else is concerned, we'll leave it up to You. Thank You."
6. "No, I'm going to be baptized, damn it!"
7. "Well, I've had two years to sharpen my claws. (Waves her hand gaily to Sylvia) Jungle-red, Sylvia! Good night, ladies!"
8. "It's all set. I've got the tickets; we don't have to worry about incidentals; and the carfare is only 30 cents.——Can you lend me 30 cents?"
9. ". . . . it seems the Consul was shot, stabbed, and poisoned."
   "Well, the son of a bitch! Did it kill him?"
10. "You ought to know. You've got to write it. It's the curtain for your last act, isn't it?"

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Monument to Obsolescence

SINGAPORE IS SILENT. By George Weller. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company. 1943. 300 *pp., with index.* $3.

Reviewed by HALLETT ABEND

As book follows book about the loss of the Far East to the Japanese, it becomes progressively clearer that while Washington was alone responsible for the Philippine disaster, the British and Dutch alone were not responsible for the loss of Malaya, Singapore, Burma, and the East Indies.

George Weller, foreign correspondent for the *Chicago Daily News*, now makes revelations about Malaya, in his book "Singapore Is Silent," similar to those made by Jack Belden concerning Burma in his "Retreat with Stilwell," and these two books taken together fix much of the blame for blundering and inept decisions upon London and Washington in almost equal measure.

Mr. Weller saw too much, and had too much to tell. In parts his book gives an impression like that of an illustrated lecture in which the speaker talks so fast that one vivid lantern slide after another is removed from the screen before the audience has time to appreciate its full significance. A more painstaking sorting and rejection of material would have given the work a greater impact.

In Malaya the British did not have to cope with deadly native hatred and opposition, open and covert, as they did in Burma. But in Malaya, too, they had to die magnificently. All of the British imperial regiments, particularly the Argylls, and all of the native Indian troops, too, made new records of courage and endurance. The loss of Malaya and the quick fall of "impregnable" Singapore were due to muddled interpretations of political, naval, and military strategy, and to the dismaying fact that the Japanese proved more modern-minded in warfare.

"Singapore Is Silent" brings out anew how completely the present-day administrators of British colonies have become divorced from the subject peoples whom they rule. In Singapore both the civil and military authorities were certain that the native and Chinese portions of Malaya's population would be thrown into panic at the first air raid, and that their main problem would be sabotage and traitorous fifth-column activities. There was no panic, and almost no fifth column activity, and toward the end of the struggle the British authorities handsomely admitted the errors of their expectations, and conceded that the conduct of the natives had been "magnificent."

In Singapore, says Mr. Weller, "the blood banks did as big a job as the money banks." When the bombings became severe, wounding many hundreds daily, British women, Australian nurses, Chinese merchants and Malay workmen, Tamil ricsha coolies, and Indians all crowded the hospital steps. "The blood brotherhood of the donors in Singapore, selfish capital of the selfish East, had to be seen to be believed."

In the first ten pages of his book Mr. Weller expresses some arresting views concerning America's future in the Far Pacific. This country must remain there, in great power, or else abandon that part of the world altogether, and then probably perish, he believes. "Asia," he argues, "is the kindergarten of American geopolitics, and the American people are the reluctant pupils who dislike the lessons they must learn, and have not yet understood that the old, simple life of play in the garden at home is gone forever."

The author does not believe that this war will be the end of blood letting between America and Japan. He holds that we face a long struggle, akin to that of the Romans against the Carthaginians, the Greeks and the Persians; that if Japan wins it will grow stronger, if it loses it will not forgive defeat. The struggle will go on, he believes, "until not alone the body but the soul of one Power or the other is annihilated, until the land of one is plowed with salt, its men dead and its women and children divided and lost among another people."

George Weller and a New Guinea Native

Here is no neutral book. It will arouse either warm approval or hot denunciation, and, we hope, much sober thought and heart searching.

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The Man Who Wouldn't Be Counted Out

SEVEN CAME THROUGH. By Captain Edward V. Rickenbacker. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1943. 118 *pp.* $1.50.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

THE press has been most enthusiastic about Captain Rickenbacker's story of the twenty-one days he and his companions spent adrift on the Pacific. Bill White writes an introduction to the short book, which concludes with the following paragraph:

> If this story lacks anything it is cannibalism and, had it been longer, it might have had even that; for in another week I think his raft colleagues would, with relish, have eaten Eddie. There is a limit to everything. Even the tough old Pacific, after battling Eddie Rickenbacker for twenty-one days, finally gave him up to the skies, I would imagine with a weary sigh of relief along its white beaches.

Everyone in America knows the story of Eddie Rickenbacker, from the days when he was a speed-demon in a racing car to his career as ace of aces among American pilots in the last war, to his work in the aircraft industry and his advisory work for the Army in the present conflict. He is what he prides himself upon being, a rugged individualist and an unusually brave and resourceful fighter. He tells his story—I have no way of knowing whether he had any journalistic assistance—with straightforwardness and modesty. If I had not read a similar story of men adrift in rubber rafts, called "The Raft," some time ago, I might be more thrilled by this saga. Captain Whittaker, the co-pilot of the wrecked plane, has also written his version of the story Captain Rickenbacker tells. I have not read that; but I understand that each book complements the other. But "The Raft" was the first of such books, and still, to me, remains the best of them. After he was rescued, Captain Rickenbacker went on, completed his mission, and visited, among other places, Gaudalcanal. He saw American fighting troops operating under the most terrible natural circumstances. He came home thinking and feeling that nothing we could do for those boys out there could possibly exceed their deserts.

Also, in chapter V, he makes some recommendations as to the improvements of the rafts—which may be called "Rickenbackers" in the future—suggestions eminently sensible, that should be adopted without hesitation. Then comes his "Message to America," which it would seem his publishers have judiciously pruned of certain rather wild statements in his public speeches. In his public speeches, since his return, he has managed to antagonize a good many people. When he began to enter the realm of labor rights and wrongs, of economics and government, he got entirely out of his depth. Indeed, he reached the point of making the statement—which does not appear in this book—that America's front line soldiers "do not want and will not accept regimentation of their lives or planned economy." In an excellent letter to *The Times,* Mr. Arthur Upham Pope commented as follows upon that statement. I quote in part, as the letter was long:

Captain Eddie Rickenbacker is moved by a stretcher following his rescue from a life raft in the South Pacific.

> Should not such a dramatic and sweeping pronouncement in behalf of the millions of American soldiers be accompanied by credentials? The American armed forces constitute a characteristic cross-section of the American nation, comprising every variety of opinion. There is no warrant in supposing that on post-war problems of reconstruction, or even its broader policies, there is at present any real unanimity, and certainly as yet no authentic expression. The only person who could have any warrant whatever in speaking in the name of the whole of the armed forces would be the President, and he wisely refrains.
>
> As for our front-line soldiers rejecting a planned economy, it is certain that a very large number of them have seen that some rational control of major economic and political forces is indispensable if we are to avoid another and final catastrophe. The soldiers in the last war were not particularly happy about the unplanned economy to which they returned in 1920, with the penalties it exacted in the following melancholy decade.
>
> It was planned economy which enabled the Germans to forge their devastating thunderbolt of war. It was planned economy that enabled England, beleaguered and all but disarmed, to carry on alone in the face of unrelenting peril. It was planned economy that enabled Russia, by a painfully narrow margin, to withstand the most terrific military onslaught in the history of war—to withstand and to roll it back; and had there been any less planned economy in Russia her disaster would have been ours also, to be paid for in blood, suffering and treasure. It was in part the lack of a planned economy that made France the easy victim of the Wehrmacht and Goebbels's diabolical propaganda offensive.
>
> It is sheer defeatism, the counsel of a dangerous despair, to say that the economic and political forces that have demonstrated their power to destroy civilization cannot be organized and controlled. But that's what we mean by planned economy, as against the chaos and caprice of each individual trying to have his own way in his own time, without regard for the necessities of others or the nation as a whole.

That seems to me extremely well said, and to illustrate Captain Rickenbacker's limitations as a would-be planner of public policy. Within his own field he is a most useful man. Stepping outside of it, with the best intentions, he is dangerous; because the average person will listen emotionally to a hero. Emotion is a driving force, but so is straight thinking; and the military life is a paradox of necessary individualism, but also of rigid discipline, and certainly, of long-range planning. As for "absenteeism," about which the Captain has lately been shouting, if you want to know how to handle it, read in *Life* for March 22 about the Cleveland war plant of Jack & Heintz, where attendance is one hundred per cent and production-turnout per worker and per square foot of floor space more than that of any other factory in this country! "The kindest word most of the other employers have for Jack & Heintz is 'socialistic'." Captain Eddie would think the employees unbelievably pampered. But Bill Jack "slices it different"; and gets extraordinary results.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 469)

N. ANGELL:
FROM CHAOS TO CONTROL
(1933)

Certainly the ordinary man does not see in the demand for the maintenance of peace and of national sovereignty a contradiction of principles upon which all organized society is founded.... A curious standard of values is revealed.

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The War Threats to Health

WHAT THE CITIZEN SHOULD KNOW ABOUT WARTIME MEDICINE. By Lt. Col. J. R. Darnall and V. I. Cooper. New York: W. W. Norton. 1942. 237 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by MABEL S. ULRICH

FOR the families of the men who are now being sent into every part of the world it is heartening to learn that no army in history has had its health so well protected as is ours today. One of the ironies of war is the impetus it gives to the discovery of life-saving techniques. As laboratories, hospitals, and individual researchers speed up production, the resulting new ideas, new methods, new drugs, new instruments stimulate a mounting enthusiasm for study and experiment and one that carries well into the succeeding peace years. And war is not only a forcing-bed for ideas, it also provides opportunities for the large scale testing of these ideas. (A dramatic example is that of the "closed plaster" method of treating compound fractures and infected wounds. First proposed in World War I by the American surgeon Dr. H. Winnett Orr, it was considered too revolutionary until after Dr. Trueta of Barcelona turned to it in desperation when his city was so cruelly bombed and time became the all important factor. His success with hundreds of cases ended skepticism and because of it thousands of lives and limbs will be saved before this war is over.)

The purpose of these two books is to tell you first of the added threats to health that come with a war that embraces every climate in the world and the atmosphere above it, second to explain how the medical profession is prepared to meet this challenge, and third to give you an idea of the saving qualities inherent in the more recent discoveries, dried blood plasma, the miraculous sulpha drugs, immunizing sera, new methods of treating burns and of skin grafting and so on.

Miss Hill, a Johns Hopkins bacteriologist, is primarily interested in the infections and their carriers—with the jungle germs malaria and yellow fever, with the typhus spread by lice and now by rats, and with all the "nuisances" that lie in wait in the filth of the Orient, in the sand of the desert, in crowded shelters and training-camps—"nuisances" that may become true killers. But she tells too of how we are meeting their menace abroad, and of the eternal vigilance that will be necessary at home to prevent them from invading our own shores when the boys come home. She herself speaks of her book as "a translation of scientific jargon into every day English," but her book is more than that, for she writes of mosquitoes, and lice and rats and flies and germs and viruses not only with authority but with humor and charm. And her message, in spite of the frightening details, is nevertheless a cheering one. "The germs are there," she says in her introduction, "but so are the means for their control. For the first time in history we can face these invisible dangers with intelligence and equanimity."

Dr. Darnall is an army officer and his emphasis is primarily on the functions of the medical man and the medical machinery that has been set up to combat the "silent enemies." He begins with the examination of selectees, shows us the way in which the medical departments of the various services are organized for their work in combat zones, the types of ambulances, the chains of hospitals extending from the field to the bases and finally back home, how camp sanitation is provided and communicable diseases controlled. He discusses briefly the new problems of psychiatry, aviation and immunization, and has a final chapter on demobilization. His is a tersely written, admirable survey of the entire business of the medical care designed to make and keep our forces the healthiest of all time.

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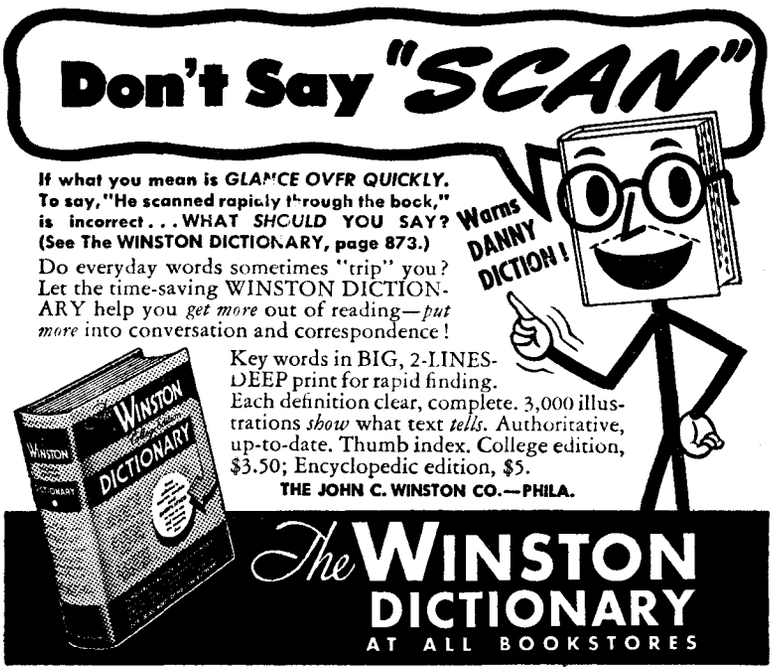

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The New New York of Tomorrow

NEW YORK PLANS FOR THE FUTURE. By Cleveland Rodgers. New York: Harper & Bros. 1943. 293 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by FREDERICK L. ACKERMAN

IN the Preface to this book, Mr. Rodgers states that it issues from the "point of view of a reporter with the detachment imposed by ignorance of the technical aspects of City Planning." This may have been true when Mr. Rodgers took office as a member of the newly created City Planning Commission in 1938. While this gives ample evidence of his detachment, it exposes no ignorance of technical considerations.

"City Planning is a simple matter, easily understood by anyone who knows that . . . . streets should be graded; that sunlight and air are good for people and that order is better than chaos. It is the entire social, economic and political scheme of things that is complicated." That epitomizes what his book is about.

The first half is given over to the ever changing social, economic, and political framework of this particular city out of which it acquired its now obsolete three dimensional pattern. It is a fascinating and fantastic story. At the very outset Mr. Rodgers swings into a vivid description of the city as it appears to new arrivals who see it from the bay when it is shrouded in luminous haze, or of an evening when the dark, fantastic towers gleam with their millions of lights. But abruptly he draws aside that bright and shining backdrop and focuses attention upon "the cruel contrasts between wealth and poverty, gaiety and suffering, hope and despair."

The eight chapters which constitute Part I. are in many respects unique in the literature of Planning: at least they fit into no established category. "How New Yorkers Make a Living," to quote a chapter heading, is shown to have been the dominating factor giving rise to the character and quality of the city's three dimensional pattern. The extent of the expanding areas of blight, physical decay, and obsolescence makes a vast rebuilding program no less than imperative.

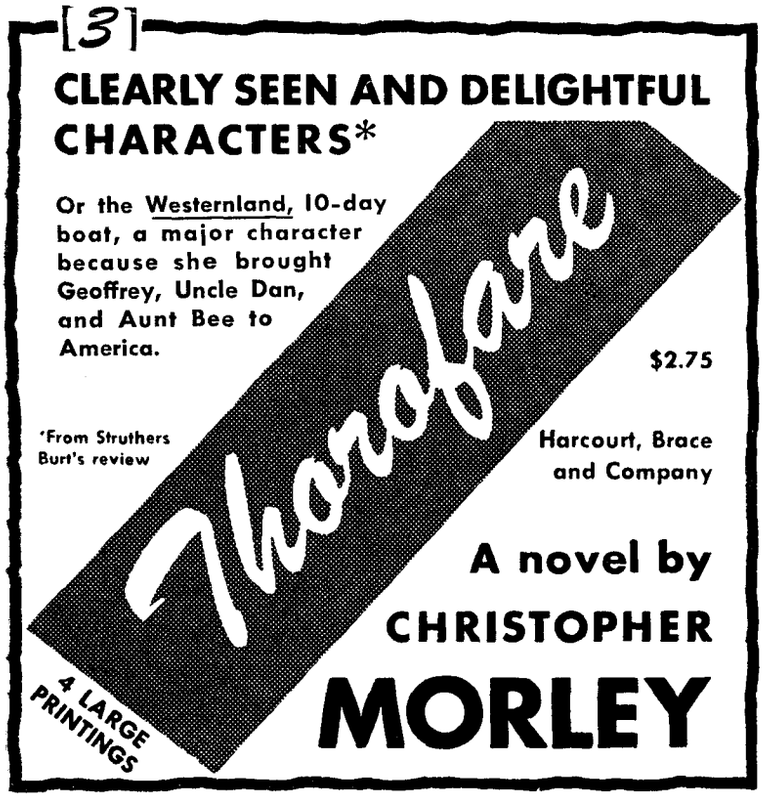
While Mr. Rodgers points out the discrepancy as between the incomes of a large fraction of the urban population, and the cost of living, he does not bluntly state that in 1940 only one family out of three had sufficient income to function as a market for new habitations: that is the brutal fact about which any rebuilding program must concern itself.

The chapter, "The City as a Landlord," is a brilliant, spotlighted account of the train of disastrous consequences which followed the early adoption by the city of the policy of selling its underlying land at low prices or of giving it away. This course of action gave issue to large private fortunes; but left the city hopelessly behind in supplying its ever expanding need for public services. Through this policy the city lost other than a feeble, make-believe control of its underlying land —and its own destiny.

The chapter "Boom and Collapse," covers the tragic history of the two decades, the '20's and '30's, which followed as cause and effect. The precarious state of equilibrium which had obtained prior to World War I. was wrecked by the boom of the 1920's. The greatest building boom the city had ever experienced is broken down into the most utterly fantastic actions. We not only built a mountainous bulk of financial (paper) and physical structures for which there was not the slightest need; but we built most of this bulk in ways that were obsolete and in the wrong place.

Part II. is given over to exploration: potentialities are canvassed; and Mr. Rodgers peers down a number of "Vistas." But he is not starry-eyed: he is too conscious of the cultural bricks and mortar out of which the new city must be fashioned. Evidently "the best is good enough," as Veblen might have put it. The world of the moment bristles with potentialities. But to realize no more than a few of them—that, as yet, is a matter of touch and go. Mr. Rodgers is hopeful.

The book straightens out the record of how we "planned" our city and came by our Metropolis of Highly Organized Discomfort. And it flushes a flock of the most disturbing questions. What, for example, will such a cultural and material environment most likely do to man who is, as yet, quite as neolithic as modern? And what had man best do to make this monstrous, obsolete contraption a more agreeable place in which to dwell?



ANSWERS TO LITERARY QUIZ

1. Sheridan Whiteside, in "The Man Who Came ot Dinner," by Kaufman and Hart.
2. Walter Burns, in "The Front Page," by Hecht and MacArthur.
3. Chris Christopherson, in "Anna Christie," by Eugene O'Neill.
4. The Stage Manager, in "Our Town," by Thornton Wilder.
5. Martin Vanderhof, in "You Can't Take It With You," by Kaufman and Hart.
6. Clarence Day, Sr., in "Life With Father," by Lindsay and Crouse.
7. Mary Haines, in "The Women," by Clare Boothe.
8. Henry Aldrich, in "What A Life," by Clifford Goldsmith.
9. Captain Mulrooney, in "Margin for Error," by Clare Boothe.
10. Linda Esterbrook, in "No Time for Comedy," by S. N. Behrman.

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The Crostics Club

ALL grist for my mill, thought I, as I read of the Oceanarium to be built at Coney Island to house fish from all over the world, thus enlarging our piscine vocabulary. The first time I visited the Bronx Zoo, aside from delight in the antics of the chimpanzees, penguins, and ostriches, which I could watch forever and a day, I came away with a list of confounding DC words like *nchega, rhesus, macacque, catarrhine.*

Now, today, in working on a DC for Series 15, I had one word (beginning with *O*) left to finish and the letters *e e u n* to use up. Imagine my glee as I glanced down the index of Gayley's "Classic Myths" to come upon *Oeneus* as if made-to-order, for I had an *s* available in another word. To be sure, Oeneus was but the father of Meleager of the Calydonian Hunt and later father-in-law of Hercules, not an important fact, but as easily accessible to you as to me. How much juggling it saved me, and how well it illustrated that a "planned economy" just doesn't work in making DCs!

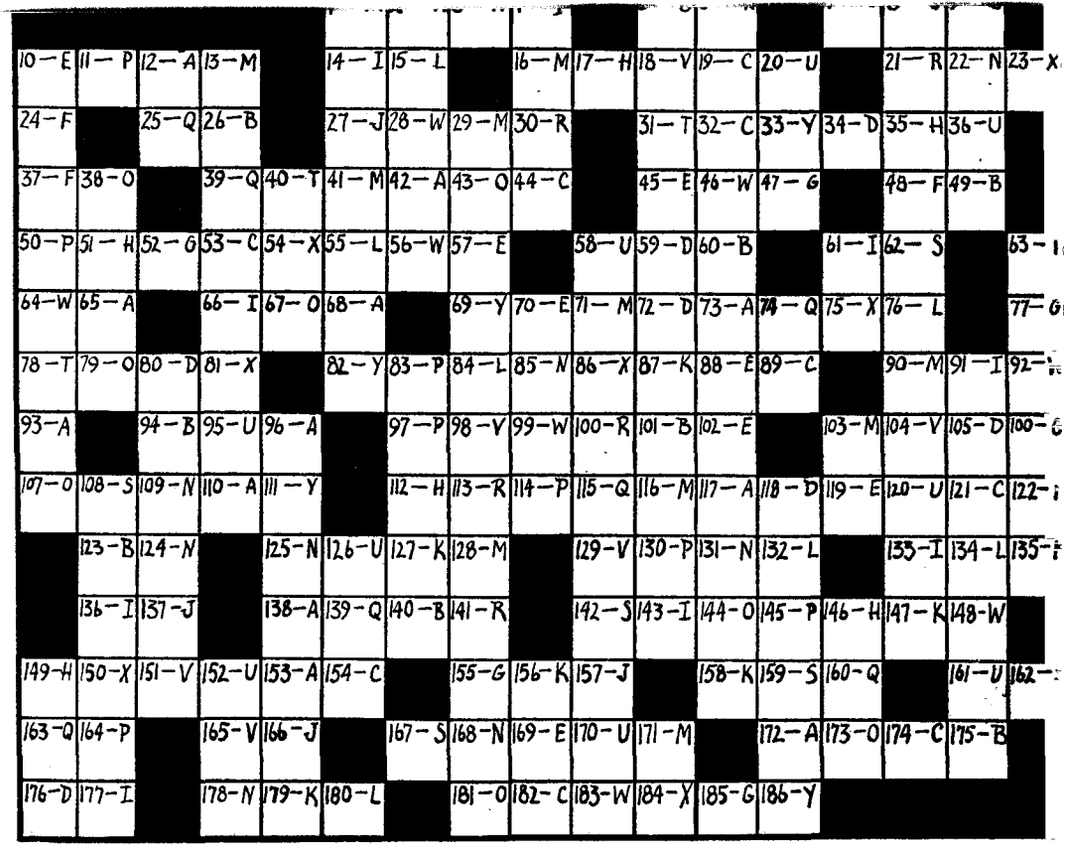
Mrs. John I. Walter, San Francisco, questions in No. 465 the definition of *colophon* as "an emblem on the title page of a book," etc., when the innate meaning of the word is *the finishing stroke.* Yet WNI, p. 528, def. 3, defines it as I did. Perhaps Steven Byington, of whom I am going to tell you more some day, long experienced in book publishing from many angles, can tell us how this antithetical use came about.

From the same puzzle Mrs. Robert A. Millikan, Pasadena, challenges the fairness of my definition of *entropy* as "an inactive or static condition," adding artfully that "a Nobel Prize scientist to whom I have access tells me that no physicist would thus recognize the word." Unfortunately my reference wasn't so alive, but I took the definition from WNI, p. 855. Its use is marked *figurative,* but so many words in common use derive their meanings thus, that I can't afford the space to label them.

Weren't you amused to note the furor with which newspaper writers commented on Mme. Chiang's use of *obtunded* in her speech before Congress? That word is an old friend of yours. And didn't her unique English style, as a whole, and read aloud, sound like the translations of those sage philosophers from Lin Yutang's "Anthology of China?"

Mr. Raymond C. Delmont's proposal as it takes shape in a recent letter is so much more involved in labor, time, and space demanded from you and me, that I doubt its feasibility. I am, therefore, withholding the letters received from those interested until I hear from him in reply to my latest letter.

E. S. K.



Double-Crostics: No. 470

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-five words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (1939 edition).

The solution of last week's *Double Crostic* will be found on page 24 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. To give up integrity for worldly gain (3 wds.)

B. A ball of cowslips (Engl.—comp.)

C. Embarks in a business, etc. (2 wds.)

D. That which feeds or sustains.

E. The *Mary* subject to Burns's "Mary in Heaven."

F. Wanes; declines.

G. A Cromwell Civil War victory—June 1645.

H. Nelson's flagship at Trafalgar with *The*).

I. Addiction to drink.

J. English author and lexicographer (1499-1546—*Boke named the Governour*).

K. The awe-inspiring quality associated with religion and deity.

L. Quality of greediness in eating.

M. Sculptor of the *Lion of Lucerne.*

N. Spiritually akin.

O. Having a changeable luster or color.

P. The last.

Q. The thick application of a pigment to a canvas or panel.

R. Italian painter—1480-1556.

S. English poet—1867-1900.

T. The priest of a Mohammedan mosque.

U. Information or illumination coming incidentally.

V. A kind of airship (colloq.) (pl.)

W. The worship of asses.

X. Shuffling, as pages of a book.

Y. The color bronze-yellow.

WORDS

12 68 138 172 117 110 96 93 73 153 42 65

94 5 26 175 49 101 123 140 9 60

44 19 89 182 53 121 174 32 154

105 59 176 34 80 72 118

102 119 57 70 10 169 88 45

24 37 48 122

185 52 77 106 155 47

149 2 112 35 146 51 17

14 61 136 91 133 143 66 177

137 27 166 8 157

158 147 127 87 135 179 156 6

132 76 134 84 55 180 15

13 171 71 116 90 103 1 16 29 128 41

85 131 124 109 178 22 125 168

181 67 107 144 173 38 79 7 43

145 130 83 50 114 11 97 164

25 39 115 74 163 160 139

21 113 30 141 100

167 159 142 108 162 62

49 31 63 78

120 126 58 36 161 152 20 95 170

165 129 18 98 104 151

28 56 99 64 46 148 183 92

86 150 3 23 81 184 75 54

33 82 186 111 4 69

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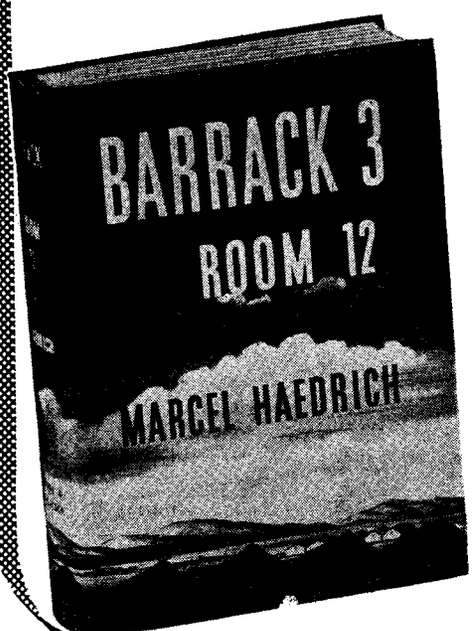

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